MUSLIMS OF CALCUTTA

M. K. A. Siddiqui

About the Book

This study is an attempt to observe aspects of social organization of the Muslims in this massive urban centre. It is based on delineation of various identifiable segments of the Muslim population, drawn from major regions of the country and naturalized in the metropolis like most other citizens.

The segments are not only ethnic, based on areas of origin, but also on sects and affiliation to mystic orders, both the latter are of overriding nature and cross cut the ethnic segments.

A broad pattern of inter-relationship between the segments including the ethnic groups have been the main focus of the study.

The picture of the organization of society that emerges provides unmistakable hints of the pattern of the social organization of the Muslims in the country as a whole. Muslim society in the area of our study has been observed to be meeting point of two divergent systems – the cultural ideals of Islam and the social ideals of caste. A closer look on interaction between the two exemplifies the harmonization of the two systems and emergent pattern in the social life of the community under study.

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MUSLIMS OF CALCUTTA

A Study in Aspects of Their Social Organisation

M. K. A. Siddiqui

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FOREWORD

When the proposal for printing the third edition of the 'Muslims of Calcutta' was brought to my notice, immediately it is decided that we approach Dr. Siddiqui, who has since retired from service, whether it is possible to update the information. Dr. Siddiqui has very kindly prepared a preface to the third edition. He further opines that in itself the updating need to be independent endeavour. Survey definitely would look for such opportunity so that social change can be brought into some perspective of temporality and recent thinking of 'Multiculturalism'. However reprinting the original, seems to be in order with the demand.

V R Rao

(V. R. Rao)
Director-in-Charge

Preface to the Third Edition

The second edition of this monograph having gone out of print, several years ago, and persistent demand for the book has warranted its reproduction for the third time. This third edition does not materially differ from the first and the second.

The scope of this study, as spelt out in the volume, had been limited to aspects of social organization of the Muslims in this metropolis. The author had endeavoured to confine his observation to the social reality focussing on the issues within its purview, without making any deliberate attempt to ignore other aspects. By and large the reviews, both within the country and abroad, were appreciative and encouraging, and though to many the attempt was commendable, there were some implied observations on its limited scope, particularly the inadequacy of data on some related aspects of life of the community under study, mainly on occupational pursuits, economic and educational status, health and housing conditions etc., taking into account the contemporary and modern developments.

Scope for improvement in a work of this nature is always present and anthropological study of, or within a metropolis of this size, has its own problems, yet it may not be difficult to present a glimpse of the aspects of life observed to have been left out or inadequately dealt with.

The areas of residence of the Muslims in Calcutta are mainly situated in the ecological zone of the city which lies just beyond the central Business District, technically known as the areas of transition. It is in this zone that a number of slums or bustees, as they are called, as also the older areas of the city, are situated. Bustees occupy an area of 21.35 sq. km out of the total area of 187.33 sq. km of the Calcutta Municipal Corporation, accommodating only a little less than half of the city's population. Constituting about 800,000 individuals or 18 per cent of the total population of CMC, around three fourth of the Muslim population is concentrated in the bustees along with some non-Muslim fellow citizens. Slums or the areas of sub-standard housing vary considerably from one ecological zone to other. A description of the kind of life in the bustee may be found in a recent study 'Life in the Slums of Calcutta' (2004).

A variety of occupations are followed by the members of the community, but the predominant nature of their occupational pursuits has a distinct pattern comprising self-employed or people employed in unorganized sector or artisans and craftsmen or engaged in small trade and figuring insignificantly in government, semi-government and organized sectors. It is interesting that the bustees are both the areas of their residence and place of work and may be seen as the hub of feverish economic activities. Their hard work is not adequately rewarded due to prevailing norms of business in the city. Modern developments have deprived the poorer section of the community of some of their monopolies by powerful business and quite often made them to compete with state enterprise without facilitating their entry in other fields.

Educationally, the community remains backward. Only 11 per cent of the boys and girls of school going age find admission in recognized schools and a total of 25 per cent of children may be found in educational institutions of all sorts, including madrashas and maktabs in the city. The predominant linguistic segment of the community suffers from dearth of educational institutions which could cater to the educational needs of its children. Educational scenario of the Muslims of Calcutta has been dealt with in a subsequent work "Educating a Backward Minority" (1984) in considerable detail which needs updating. A recent study on a Calcutta bustee has revealed a disturbing fact that the percentage of literacy in the bustee was lower than what it had been at the time of independence.

Divergent socio-economic developments affecting the dominant and the minority within the framework of modern institution, may be explained in several ways but a close look at the social organizational aspect of the Muslims will continue to lead us to the conclusion that Muslim society in the area of our study remains a meeting point of two divergent system, the ideology of Islam and the structural norms of caste. The two systems are adaptive of one another in the way it has been explained in the study and amply manifests itself in the social organization of the Muslims in this massive urban centre.

M. K. A. Siddiqui

Preface to Second Edition

The second edition of this monograph does not materially differ from the first one. Excepting for a few minor additions and alterations here and there to clarify the points raised or to support the argument put forth in the volume, no major change has been made. A brief quotation from Mir Jawwad Hussain's Tarikh-e-Hasan (1912), a little known work, illustrates the diversity of origin of the Indian Muslims indicating their derivation from various segments of the Indian population including the higher castes of the Hindu Community. Footnotes have been added and renumbered wherever necessary. A table has been added to provide comparative figures of the various religious communities in the city. Appendix IV is also a new addition which gives the wardwise Hindu and Muslim population in the city to provide an idea of the areas of concentration of the Muslim population in the city. The main concentration of their population will be observed to lie just beyond the Central Business District, often known as the areas of transition and it is in this area that most of their slums are situated.

The qualitatively poor involvement of the Muslims with the modern institutions and with the socio-economic environment of their habitat, as also their recession into comparative backwardness, from their predominantly artisan background, consequent upon the changes occurring in various trades, either through large scale organization or through the development of state enterprise, deserved considerable attention. This has been pointed out by some reviewers who have otherwise been highly appreciative of the study. This socio-economic aspects of the life of the Muslims of Calcutta has merely been alluded to, in this volume and deserves a detailed treatment in a separate study. I am looking forward to an opportunity for bringing out a subsequent volume on the problem in future.

I am grateful to various reviewers and feel greatly encouraged by their highly appreciative comments on the first edition of the book.

The appreciative reception of the first edition resulted in its going out of print within a short period. This has encouraged the publication of the second edition and for this the author is in duty bound to thank Shri H. K. Rakshit, Director, Anthropological Survey of India. Shri M. Das, Publication Officer and Shri J. R. Chakraborty of the Printing & Publication Section have seen this through press which I acknowledge with thanks.

Calcutta
June, 1979

M. K. A. Siddiqui

Foreword

During 1962-63 Professor Nirmal Kumar Bose, the then Director of the Anthropological Survey of India, initiated a social survey of the City of Calcutta. In this pioneering research in urban anthropology the main finding was that primordial groups like linguistic and religious communities tended to be socially and culturally segregated in space, occupation and voluntary associations. The process of urbanization did not wither away the community boundaries in a model of "melting pot". In the same report it was pointed out that the Muslims of Calcutta exhibited a tendency to concentrate in certain wards of the City and also to specialize in a few occupations. We were interested in finding out in detail whether, within the Muslim community, the boundaries of region, language and "caste" were maintained in the urban situation.

Dr. M. K. A. Siddiqui, who was entrusted with this task of exploration, became vigorously involved in the programme and performed the amazing task of identifying nearly 60 endogamous caste-like ethnic groups among the Muslims of this City. The segmentation of the Muslims is mainly on national, regional and ethnic lines. It was also discovered, in line with the earlier findings of Ghaus Ansari, that the Muslims of Calcutta are broadly stratified into four blocks of ethnic groups. The groups belonging to the lower blocks have "caste" councils. Dr. Siddiqui critically examines whether the inter group hierarchy among the Muslims could be labelled as a caste system. He feels that although the Muslim hierarchy shares some of the basic social structural attributes of the Hindu caste system like endogamy, caste council, occupational specialization and notion of social gradation, the hierarchy is rationalized in non-ritual terms. He sums up that the model that emerges out of the interaction of Islamic great tradition and the dominant social structural milieu of caste is not exactly identical with the Hindu model of caste. Yet it bears the main

structural features of the caste system and hence it may be labelled as a variant of the caste system.

But caste-like segmentation covers only a part of the story of Muslim social organization in Calcutta. There are sectarian and khanqahi segments cutting across the caste divisions and there are also the overriding institutions, mosques and maktabs, generating an over-all solidarity of the Muslims. In the present dissertation, however, Dr. Siddiqui has been mainly concerned with the nature of segmentation and stratification in Muslim society rather than with a detailed examination of over-all solidarity of the Muslims as an urban minority community.

The author makes it clear that although the numerically dominant Hindus and the Muslim minority generally maintain mutual exclusiveness in ritual life, in the secular spheres there is considerable interdependence among the two communities in the matter of rendering and receiving specialized services. It has been rightly pointed out that the Hindus and Muslims of Calcutta have to continually adjust their economic and social activities taking due cognizance of the annual cycle of life activities of the other group.

In recent years there has been a growing interest in research on society and culture of the Muslims of India. Dr. Siddiqui's painstaking research on the Muslims of Calcutta will undoubtedly be considered by relevant scholars as an important pioncering contribution in this growing field.

Surajit Chandra Sinha

Director
Anthropological Survey of India

Acknowledgments

I find it difficult to adequately express my deep sense of gratitude to Dr. Surajit Chandra Sinha, Director, Anthropological Survey of India, for his unbounded sympathy and encouragement to me, throughout the work, which is so characteristic of him. It was but for his penetrating interest in the study and his valuable guidance to me that the accomplishment of the work was possible. I also express my thanks to the numerous informants belonging to the Muslim community, who not only supplied me with the data but also helped me to check their correctness.

I am also grateful for the help and cooperation I have received from the Anthropological Survey of India. Shri S. K. Sanyal of the Survey has helped me in taking photographs and Shri Subhas Datta and Sm. Archana Moitra were of help in drawing map and chart. Shri S. M. Kulkarni, Head Librarian of the Survey, has so kindly helped me in providing reference materials in connection with the study and Shri J. R. Chakraborty of the Publication Section of the Survey has seen it through the press which I thankfully acknowledge.

M. K. A. S.

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1

Introduction

THE BACKGROUND

As an observer initiated into the science of society I had occasions to notice the Muslim population in the city of Calcutta to be segmented into groups mainly bearing ethnic character. Local newspaper reports quite often reflected the activities of these segments and sometimes names of institutions confirmed their existence. During my prolonged stay in the city over a decade as a member of the Muslim community evidences suggesting this kind of segmentation and even status differences, often expressed in inter-group stereotypes, became all the more convincing.

But those observations, merely of a casual nature, often raised to my mind a number of questions about the nature of this social phenomena which appeared to persist despite a definite concept of society in Islam and the overall pressure of a massive urban situation. The former is known to discourage birth determined status and the latter is generally supposed to develop interrelationship on a pattern that tends to dilute ethnic boundaries.

A study leading to the understanding of the problem became an irresistable temptation, which to my great pleasure became an assignment in the Anthropological Survey of India in 1969 and subsequently also a topic for my doctoral dissertation. I had, however, no set notion about the problem, although some idea of the village I come from in the southern suberb of Bhagalpur in Bihar had left an impression of hierarchical pattern among Muslim groups of varied backgrounds that could not be explained in terms of Islam alone. The village I have referred to presents—a picture of clearly visible segments. Each segment or *beradari* roughly oocupies a *tola* or locality and observes strict endogamy and restricted commensal relationship. But this relates to a different area in a rural setting. These earlier impressions were naturally recalled to my mind when I embarked on the study of the aspects of Muslim society in the city of Calcutta.

MUSLIMS IN INDIAN SOCIETY : A BRIEF REVIEW

Administrative records dating back from the middle of the 19th century, recent works on social history and several Anthropological studies on the Muslim society suggest the presence of caste or caste-like features among the Muslims in different parts of India. A brief review of some of these may not be out of place here.

Right from the middle of the 19th century a number of glossaries of castes and tribes on various regions of India by a number of administrators and missionaries have given some idea of the Muslim groups and their backgrounds in varying details. Some sort of picture of the inner organization of these groups emerges from these glossaries, the compilers of which include such persons as Elliot (1844), Ibbetson (1883), Nesfield (1885), Risley (1892), Crooke (1896), Thurston (1909), Iyer (1909), Rose (1911), Russel & Lall (1916), etc. All these are based on census reports and give fairly elaborate picture of the Muslims and their occupational backgrounds, though obviously, no integrated profile of the community emerges out of these materials.

Most of the compilers of these glossaries such as Crooke (1896) and Risley (1891), have however, deliberately referred to Muslim groups, occupational or otherwise, as caste, while a few like Ibbetson (1883) have also referred to them as classes.

It is probably basing on materials of the above kind that we find Max Weber observing the extreme assimilation of caste order in Indian Islam. But he also finds it to be devoid of the spirit that nourishes the order on its native soil (Weber, 131 : 1958). Subsequent observers like Hutton (1946), Smith (1947), Bose (1951), Srinivas (1968), etc. also notice caste or some of its elements in Muslim society in India. Falling in line with the earlier compilers of glossaries of castes and tribes these writers generally refer to individual Muslim ethnic groups as castes without spelling out the nature of the system operative within the community. Thus Hutton refers to Momins or Muslim weavers, Lalkhanis or Muslim Rajputs, Gaddis or Muslim graziers, Mirasis or Muslim ministrals, Turkiya Banjara (1969 : 121) and Khojas and Memans (1969 : 38-40), as castes. These writers have also tried to explain the phenomenon among Muslims in historical terms believing it to be persistence of their pre-Islamic past. Hutton, for example says 'that even change of religion does not destroy the caste system, for Muslims who do not recognize it as valid, are often found to observe it in practice and there are Muslim castes as well as Hindu' (1969 : 2). Holding identical views Bose (1951) observes that 'Muslim converts have continued to obey the caste rules of occupational monopoly'. 'They continue to observe the hereditary

character of their occupation, to believe in the superiority of various economic pursuits and even continued to observe the old rules of endogamy'. He further observes that many of the notions of superiority or otherwise of the occupations continued to be in vogue among the converts as before (Bose : 1951). Smith's observations that 'the Hindu caste system of India has affected Islam also ; or in historical terms has not ceased to affect those Indians who are now Muslims' (1947 : 275) though views the phenomenon of 'caste' among the Muslims, primarily, as persistence of their pre-Islamic legacy, may also be interpreted to refer to the situational factor affecting those elements of society who came from outside the country or were rather later immigrants. Srinivas in his observation, however, seems to explain the caste among the Muslims both in terms of historical perspective and of the dominance of the situation. He observes that 'caste, which was so successful in absorbing autonomous groups everywhere, also provided the pattern of relations with non-Hindu groups, Christians and Muslims were regarded as caste, too, and they accepted such a status' (1969 : 272 in Social Inequality ed. Andre' Beteille). Thus he views caste as a larger system embracing different religious communities in India, with provisions for some sort of autonomous position for these religious communities within the system, for he immediately concedes that caste among Muslims may not be the same as among the Hindus (1968 : 194).

These are only a few of the many observations which, though of immense help in throwing light on the subject, have largely been of casual nature. These are not substantiated by direct field observations on the specific problem.

Several historians like Titus (1930), Smith (1947), Qureshi (1962), Ahmad (1964) and Mujeeb (1967) in giving accounts of the Muslims in the Indian sub-continent are basically in agreement about the diversity of their origin. Indian Muslims have been seen on the one hand as composed of 'foreigners' or comparatively later immigrants from such divergent regions as Arabia, Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan speaking different languages and differing in many aspects of their culture, and indigenous converts drawn from widely differing backgrounds on the other. Smith expresses the view that it was the destitute and outcaste who flocked to the new religion of Islam. Bose (1951) observes the converts as unemployed sections of the caste and Srinivas sees them as drawn from the so-called low castes (1968 : 194). These observations, particularly the latter, as we shall see later are only partially true and hence of limited validity.

A genealogical work Tarikh-e-Hasan (1912) in Persian by Mir Jawwad Husain of Gaya (Bihar) provides valuable information about Muslim convents from such castes as Thakurs, Babhans, Goalas and Kayesthas in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Similar, information may be derived from 'Haft Tamasha' by Diwani Singh Khatri, later known as Mirza Qateel.

An extract from Tarikh-e-Hasan rendered from Persian will elucidate the point.

> "The Kshatrias, the Brahmins and the Kayesthas have been among the Hindu gentries. Several (Muslim) groups have sprung up from amongst them and likewise are the Mai Pathans who are quite numerous. The inhabitants of Baranwan and Anti are fairly well off. The Goalas who were converted to Islam assumed the name of Bhatti Pathan. They are settled in large numbers in Pargana Narhat, Mahpar and Saunt but they have no flavour of gentility in them. Their women like those of the lower classes participate in agricultural activities. The Rohila Pathans are settled in Rohilkhand and also in Pargana Sherghati but they have lost their economic status and have largely lost the purity of their origin. In Allahabad region the Goalas accepted Islam and are known as Ghosis but continue to be engaged in the milk trade. In the Pargana of Goh and Manora there are people known as Afghans but they have actually been converted to Islam from the sacred thread wearing Babhans yet their style of life is devoid of gentlemanliness. In the villages of Allahabad there are Kayestha Muslims and since they are engaged in the occupation of Patwar their names are Lala such as such Husain or Lala such and such Ali. One of them, Lala Hakim Azfar Hussain who was Mureed of Khawja Ali Hussain alias Bade Nawab Abul Barkati Abul Alai, frequently came to Gaya to pay homage to the *mazar* of the Pir and his descendants and had intimate friendship with the writer.
>
> This shows that during the rule of the kings many of them accepted Islam and continue to be Muslims. In Akbarpur in the district of Jaunpur there are Muslim Thakurs who are Zamindars, Talukdars and nobles who take pride in their surname of Thakur. No Thakur is poor. It shows that the Thakurs and Rajas having accepted Islam continue to be identified with their ancient surnames. They intermarry within their own groups. In the region of Awadh there are many neo-Muslim Rajas who still possess their estates." (P. 59-60).

With the dawn of Independence considerable interest in the advancement of research in social sciences in various institutions in the country has been notable. Several scholars like Ansari (1956 and 1961), Gupta (1956), Zarina Ahmad (1962), Barth (1960), Misra (1963), Mutatkar & Ansari (1966) and Khan (1968) took interest in the subject in varying degrees and their studies are either diachronic or synchronic or even a combination of both.

Ansaris' (1961) monograph based on published census reports relating to Uttar Pradesh observes the system of caste among the Muslims of the State. Gupta (1956) and Ahmad (1962) in their

respective papers based on field work, observe the system of ranking and other elements of caste among Muslims in two different villages of U. P. Frederik Barth (1960) finds a system of hierarchically ordered delimited named positions, characterising the pattern of social stratification in Swat in West Pakistan which he refers to as a system of caste in the structural sense. The monographic work of Misra (1963) deals with the social backgrounds of the Muslim groups in Gujarat, historically, and their interrelationship operationally through field observations suggesting certain features of the caste system among the Muslims of the State. Khan (1968) observes social stratification as inherent in Islamic society and on the basis of his field work in Bengal and West Pakistan finds a system of caste among the Muslims which he thinks has developed independently from the Hindus. It appears to me that Khan fails to observe egalitarianism as the basis of Islamic society and ignores the situational factor in his interpretation of the caste elements in the field of his study that Barth finds to be so conspicuously present in as distant an area as Swat at the north western extremity of the Indian sub-continent.

All these studies with the exception of Mutatkar & Ansari (1966) are based on rural areas where caste in general is known to operate a little more intensively than in the urban situation. Mutatkar and Ansaris, paper based on the study of some 40 families of a single ethnic group of Momins in Saugar town in Madhya Pradesh, finds caste-like features in the group in the structural sense. Though a generalised picture of the system of caste operating within the whole community is not expected to emerge from the study, it is nevertheless useful.

CONCEPT OF SOCIETY IN ISLAM

Having some idea of the available literature that throw considerable light on the Muslim society in different parts of the country, we may examine the concept of society in Islam. Historical records are also available to show how this concept of society characterising equality of all was put into practice, in early days in the land where Islam took its birth and in some other areas where Islam later spread.

As a way of life, Islam envisages a definite pattern of society that has its own mode of social interaction. The principles it lays down are basically egalitarian. The Quran, the most important of the primary sources of Muslim law and an ultimate guide to the believers[1], gives unmistakable evidence that inequality based on birth is supposed to have no relevance to Islamic society and all rankings and stratifications

1. "This is the Book ; in its guidance, sure, without doubt to those who fear God" (the Quran, S. II : 2 : 17. Tr. Abdullah Yusuf Ali).

of society, of permanent nature, based on heredity, has no place in the pattern of society woven out of the fibre of Islamic beliefs.

The story of creation given currency through Quranic[2] verses envisages the propagation of mankind out of a single couple Adam and Eve and the dispersal of human species on earth from a single centre (S. IV: 1: 178). Fitting well into the texture of Islamic belief with regard to human society, the theories of human origin and dispersal render all claims to superiority, not only based on race and colour but also on region and language, as irrelevant and unacceptable. Service[3] to God has been laid down as the supreme goal of mankind and whatever distinctive features in human groupings are evident, have been interpreted as collective endeavours for the attainment of that goal[4]. Here is an opportunity to all groups to compete in those virtues that are considered as service to Supreme Lord, to whom all activities of human life are supposed to have been dedicated[5]. It is in this context and in matters of running day to day affairs in the field of economy that certain individuals can excell over others[6].

The acceptance of egalitarian concept as the basis of Islamic society does not, therefore, rule out the existence of certain kinds of groups of national, tribal, regional and linguistic nature. These groups are supposed to maintain distinction from each other by competing for a virtuous life in the service of the Supreme Being. By implication, the competition for virtue sets forth a machanism for raising group status and attainment of greater 'Islamisation' through progressively imbibing

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2. "O mankind ! reverence your Guardian-Lord, who created you from a single person, created, of like nature, his mate, and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women" (The Quran, S. IV : 1 : 178, Tr. Abdullah Yusuf Ali).

3. "I have only created jins and men that they may serve Me" (The Quran, S. LI : 56 : 1429, Tr.Abdullah Yusuf Ali).

4. "O mankind ! We created you from a single pair of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other (not that you may dispise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of-God is he who is the most righteous of you" (The Quran, S. XLIX : 13 : 1407, Tr. Abdullah Yusuf Ali).

5. "Say : Truly, my prayer and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death, are all for God, the Cherisher of the worlds, no partner has He : This am I commanded and I am the first of those who bow to His will" (The Quran, S. VI : 162-63 : 338, Tr. Abdullah Yusuf Ali).

6. "It is We who portion out between them their livelihood in the life of this world : and We raise some of them above others in ranks, so that some may command work from others. But the mercy of thy Lord is better than the wealth which they amass" (The Quran, S. XLIII : 32 : 1331, Tr. Abdullah Yusuf Ali).

its values until perfectness is achieved. This achievement is to be judged in terms of actual performance rather than on hereditary claims.

The broad picture of Islamic society that emerges from its egalitarian concept is one composed of groups of various nature arranged horizontally and not in vertical order. Each of the groups has been given, under Quranic injunctions, equal chance to compete the others and excell in the service of the Supreme Lord and in leading a virtuous life. This competition for virtue is stated to be the reason or Divine objective[7] behind the creation of mankind and of human groups in society. There is again great emphasis on collective attainment of this virtue with perfect harmony within the group[8] and among various groups[9] that exist within the society. The competiton, thus has to be free from conflicts.

Just as there is complete absence of social determinants of status hierarchy of stable and ascribed nature, one will search in vain for its economic determinants as well, nor there is any evidence of occupations being graded differentially for the purpose of determining the ranks of those who pursue them. Awareness of the persistence of economic disparity having its own influence on stratification of society is discernable in Islam and several measures including the elaborate Quranic laws of inheritance are observable to be directed towards reducing this disparity (The Quran, S. IV : 11-12 : 181-182, Yusuf Ali) and may be seen as important levelling factor as it operates in Muslim society where the laws are strictly applicable. Besides, the duties regarding kins[10] and neighbours with economic obligations in regard to them are so strongly emphasised that ideally wealth is bound to be distributed quickly tending to level the members in the society. Perfect economic equality, does not, however, appear to have either been stipulated[11] or achieved at anytime, anywhere in Islamic society.

In spite of the persistence of economic inequality Islamic society

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7. vide footnote at No. 4

8. A saying attributed to the Prophet means "he who defects from his group he defects into the hell fire" at Hadith.

9. "And hold fast, all together, by the rope (which Allah stretches out for you) and be not divided among yourself" (The Quran, S. III : 103 : 149. Tr. Abdullah Yusuf Ali).

10. "And render to the kindred their due rights, as also to those in want, and to the wayfarer : but squander not your wealth in the manner of a spend thrift" (The Quran, Sura XVII : 26 : 701, Tr. Abdullah Yusuf Ali).

11. "That man can have nothing but what he strives for" (The Quran, S. LIII : 39 : 1449, Tr. Abdullah Yusuf Ali).

during the time of the Prophet and the Caliphs achieved a great measure of social and ritual equality among its members. This egalitarianism was very much marked in the sphere of religion and society. The seemingly impregnable boundaries of endogamy, among a people who took great pride in preserving the nobility and aristocracy of their descent, appears to have been demolished under the impact of Islam. The picture of the society during the early period of Islam as recorded in history gives unmistakable hints of Islamic equality put into practice. Levy (53-66 : 1957) with reference to *Kitab-ul Aghani* quotes a number of facts showing that a prince was no better than a Beduin in the eyes of law, a lady coming of noble Quresh and related to the Prophet himself was married to a 'lowly' slave and the most important place of worship of the Muslims, the *Ka'ba* was not only approachable to all the Muslims but it's service functionaries could belong to any racial and other categories, including the 'most despised' Negro, without any distinction whatsoever. The prevailing climate of tribal aristocracy, based on birth, was thoroughly changed, and as shown by Ibn-e-Khaldun, the philosopher historian of the 14th century A. D., the traditional foundation of Arab hierarchy was completely shaken (Grunebaum, 1961 : 199).

This is roughly the picture of the Muslim society during early caliphate, synchronising with the period of consolidation of Islam among the Arabs. With the assacination of Ali, the fourth Caliph in 661 A. D. the Islamic Republic came virtually to an end and the Umayad ambition led to the tragedy of Karbala and the degeneration of the Republic into an empire (Ameer Ali, 1955 : 52-54). The latter phase, however, marks the expanding phase of the empire beyond the confines of Arabia. The Arab thus come into contact with such peoples as the Iranians, the North Africans, the Spaniards, etc., with an air of superiority as conqueror. The conquered peoples in spite of their large scale conversion to Islam could not normally get a status equal to the Arabs.

The linguistic pride led the Arabs to call non-Arabs as *A'jam* or dumb. Belief in the superiority of their descent led them to call the Iranian Muslims as *mawali* or subservient or the Spaniard Muslims as *biladiun* or the natives. Thus in these distant lands some sort of stratification, with hierarchical attributes, re-emerged vis-a-vis the conquerors and the original inhabitants, reflecting on the one hand the prides and prejudices of the Arabs during their pre-Islamic past and on the other the cultural background of the non-Arabs entering into the fold of Islam. The shapes and forms of these emergent Muslim societies were determined according to nature of

adjustment between the varying traditions under situations of contact in the context of historical developments.

Quite a few references are available to indicate the stratification of society into a number of hierarchical segments in Iran during the Medieval period. Levy (1957) has mentioned the nature of stratification with reference to Ibn-el-Faqih's *Kitab-ul-Baldan* and Grunebaum (1961 : 177) gives the principles underlying this stratification or division of society. Thus, as Ameer Ali puts it, the democratic teachings of Islam had levelled all distinctions of race and colour ; but in distant lands, which he had entered with the help of his sword, the Arab could never rise superior to the intense pride of race which has always formed an essential characteristic of his nature (1955 : 118). The Turko-Arab relations in more recent times resulting in the break up of the Caliphate is yet another example of the strong regional sentiments at work among Muslim peoples.

Unlike most of the Middle Eastern and North African countries where Islam constitutes a dominant religion, the impact of its adherants on India has only been partial in the numerical sense. Muslims in this country not only coexist as a minority group, with a population[12] of 46,940,799 forming 10.70% of the total population, within the dominant Hindu civilization, but in a large mojority of cases have also been drawn in as converts from its fold (Qureshi 1962).

The dominant characteristics of the Indian society from the period of its known history has been a unique system of elaborately ranked stratification known as *caste.* A vast amount of literature exists on the system of caste and its various aspects. Caste has been defined by a host of writers and social scientists in varying ways, some having laid emphasis on cultural aspect, others on structural or even economic or functional aspects. Quite a few writers have seen a complex of some or all these factors underlying the Indian social system. In whatever way it is viewed, it will be admitted that in the form it has been operative as a social system in India it is fully integrated into a larger system embracing cultural, structural and economic aspects of life (Sinha : 67 ; Leach : 60). It has certain unique features of endogamy, occupational specialisation or division of labour and rules of commensality. The intergroup relationship within the system is also characterised by hierarchy generally expressed in terms of purity and pollution. These various aspects of caste, however, are not found operative in identical manner in different regions in the country (Marriot : 1958).

12. Census of India, 1961.

Keeping in mind the essential features of Islam and the social background of the Muslims in India who form a minority group within the larger framework of the dominant Hindu society with its system of caste, it is worthwhile to observe how Muslims in this country have adapted themselves with reference to the dominant social climate of their habitat.

We are aware that caste has been in the process of change under the impact of improving communication and has been responding to change in the wake of industrialisation and urbanisation. Quite a number of other related factors such as Westernisation and functioning of the newly introduced political system have been reacting on the caste system and manifest themselves more clearly on the urban population.

Islam, again, with its network of great tradition[13], has been observed to be operating in a city a little more ideally than elsewhere and because of this it has been considered as essentially an urban religion, unfolding itself in an urban milieu (Grunebaum, 1961 : 173). It is of great interest to find out as to how the Muslim population is segmented, stratified and integrated in a large urban centre as that of Calcutta.

The urban area of Calcutta, consisting of 80 wards[14] of the Calcutta Corporation on which 1961 census report is based, and also certain adjoining areas of Garden Reach and former Tollygunj Municipalities, constitute the field of the present study where Muslims form 12·78 percent of the total population, as compared to 83.94 percent of Hindu population. The field work was done from April to August 1969.

The present study is aimed at identifying endogamous ethnic groups, throwing light on their economic and cultural specializations and internal organization and then at studying the inter-relationship between these groups, hierarchically and otherwise. The operation of sects and functioning of mystic orders may also be of relevance for the study.

The study makes an attempt to delineate the segments of the Muslim society in the metropolis, based on their ethnic backgrounds, within the context of the regions, the groups have been drawn from. The sects and mystic orders have also been observed as the basis of

13. The term 'great tradition' has been used here and elsewhere in the study in the same sense as it has been done by Prof. R. Redfield in his book 'Peasant Society and Culture'.

14. The territorial municipal units of the city have since been reconstituted and they comprise of 100 wards instead of 80 as in 1961.

cross-cutting relationships within the social organization of the community. Besides, in addition to a passing reference to functional relationship between the Muslims and the Hindus in a wider context, an attempt has been made to observe and analyse the interaction of the 'cultural ideals of Islam' with the 'social ideals of caste' within the frame work of the Muslim society. It is of interest to see how these ideals forming the basis of the two divergent systems are adaptive of the other and in coexistence within the social organization of the Muslims of Calcutta.

METHODS

For an anthropological work in a city of the size of Calcutta some special techniques had to be used. For example, I had to get in touch with eminent leaders at the nodal points of social communication among the various Muslim groups in order to get preliminary information and initial entry into various ethnic groups. My first hand information about the existence of significant groups was based on Urdu newspaper reports as well as announcements relating to social activities of several groups like the Qureshi, the Rai, the Mansuri and the Qaum-e-Punjabian, etc., which gave the impression of a practice of restricting some of the activities within the respective groups. Appeals in the name of the *beradari*[15] were not uncommon. Even the names of some of the voluntary organizations and quite a few institutions appeared to reflect good amount of ethnicity about them. The presence of such organizations as Jamiat-ul-Quresh, Tanzeem-ul-Quresh, Madrasa-tul-Quresh, Momin Education Board, Momin High School, Jamiat-ur-Raeen and Jamiat-ul-Mansoor may be cited as a few examples among the many. I began reflecting on similar facts that had come to my notice in the past and began making a list of all groups of the kind whether voluntary or involuntary as also of the noted members of the respective groups in the city.

Having found out the contours of Muslim population through wardwise census figures as also from informed citizens, including those based on my own knowledge and experience in the city, I started the field work in a planned manner. It was fascinating to find various areas bearing names of ethnic character such as, Mominpur, Tantibagan, Churipara, Kasai Bustee, Kasai Mohalla, Patua Para, Patua Tola, Patuar Bagan, Nikari Pada, etc. Even several mosques and burial grounds were found bearing names derived from exclusive ethnic groups such as, *Kunjra Masjid*, *Chulia Masjid*, *Surti Maqbera*,

15. The term beradari is used to mean the ethnic group as a whole or a section thereof within which actual or potential kinship may take place.

Meman Maqbera, etc., and at least the latter was in exclusive use with very rare exceptions.

The help and co-operation that I had sought for through the columns of Urdu press did not provoke much enthusiasm among the people yet it was of considerable help in getting introduction from the organs that are usually trusted. Thus with the use of urban tools or media the problem of establishing rapport in a cosmopolitan situation was made easier.

A cross section of each of the ethnic groups was interviewed with a set of open ended questions relevant to the subject. Besides leaders, several informed members were also separately interviewed and sometimes group interviews also took place. In case of a few groups the actual functioning of the group panchayats were observed and in case of several others quite a few cases were recorded. Genealogies of several groups were also recorded but considering over 60 groups the processing of sufficient number of genealogies from each of the groups to be meaningful in the context was found to be a gigantic task, so it was not made use of to the fuller extent. To measure the extent of endogamy census of a random sample from several ethnic groups were also taken. Interview again was the main technique in studying the sects and mystic orders.

Involvement and participation was possible to a limited extent and included attendance of congregations, celebrations of milad[16] performance of fateha[17] and even taking out of sandal[18] processions and rituals relating to shrines, etc. Considering the vastness of the total population involved *I would admit that the study has been extensive rather than intensive.* Utmost care has however been taken in drawing conclusions from the study that would require further refinement as in the case of all studies in the field.

With this brief statement of the main objectives and circumstances leading to the study it will be of relevance to have a look at our field situation in both diachronic and synchronic perspectives in the next chapter and then proceed to present some of the main features of segmentation and inter-group stratification within the larger organization of the Muslim Society in the subsequent chapters.

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16. The observance of the Prophet's birthday on the 12th of Rabi-ul-Awwal, the third month of the lunar calender.
17. The observance of the death aniversary of the Prophet.
18. Ceremonial offerings at the tomb of a saint.

2

The Setting

Going through the streets of Calcutta in its various districts one will notice that it is neither an ancient nor a modern city. The circumstances of its birth towards the end of what we call the Medieval Period of our history set a definite pattern for its development that ensured the multi-ethnic character of its population and its heterogenetic growth. As is well known, the city owes its rapid development first to the commercial and subsequently also to administrative activities of the British. With the extension of the British empire towards the western parts of India, Calcutta assumed the position of the most important outlet as a major port and the ever extending British empire in India towards the north western parts particularly upto the borders of the Punjab, became its natural hinterland. The massive heterogenetic growth of the city brought many kinds of people with different backgrounds from different parts of the country and with the establishment of commercial links with other countries, from other parts of the world.

Apparently the diverse groups seem to be diffused, in a very broad sense, in the ordinary life of the city and in spite of the diverse roles played by various groups and individuals for the continuity of the city life, on a set pattern, in a very wide sense, a casual observer will not fail to notice the distinctiveness of the diverse groups in their external appearance and behaviour. The observances of the Christian, the Sikh, the Buddhist, the Muslim, the Jain and the Confucian festivals and the national festivals of the Chinese and the Tibetans are a few among the many occasions that attract the attention of all towards their distinctiveness and peculiarities. Likewise the congregations at Jewish Synagogue, at the fire worshipping Zoroastrian temple, the tribal dance on the main thoroughfares by the Afghans on Eid days and other such occasions also do not pass unnoticed in the city. The Hindu festivals particulaly Durga Puja and Kali Puja synchronising with Deepavali or the festival of lights, take the whole city in a

mood of unparallel enthusiasm for their performances in a robust fashion at a very large scale.

A very brief outline of the history of Calcutta may perhaps be of considerable help in understanding its steady growth and great diversity of its population, making it not only a cosmopolis but also in a sense a miniature India which may be of relevance to the problem under study.

Though earliest reference to Calcutta (Kalikata and Kalighat) is found in Vipradas's Manasamangala (1495 A.D.) and Abul Fazal's Ain-e-Akbari (1592 A.D.) the foundation of the city was laid at the close of the 17th century. In August 1690, when Job Charnock, an English trading agent first arrived at Kalikata to establish a factory, there was nothing significant around, except the temple a Kalighat and a small market at Baithakkhana close to the present Circular Road—Bowbazar crossing, where the Basaks and the Setts were the main traders. These were later joined by the Gandhabaniks and the Subarnabaniks. The area that first developed into the city consisted of three villages of Kalikata, Gobindapur and Sutanuti and probably only a few foot path-like roads, hardly worth the name, including one leading to the famous Kali temple from Hooghly river via present Chowringhee Road and perhaps another from the same river to Baithakkhana via present Bowbazar Street existed.

Charnock established a factory at the bank of the Hooghly in 1691 under a licence from the Nawab of Bengal. The selection of the site, in deference to the wishes of the Nawab was farsighted from the point of view of external and internal communications as well as safety from the Maratha depredations that had become so frequent those days. A shrewd businessman as Charnock was, he made proclamations inviting traders and artisans from all communities and all parts of the country.

Sir John Goldbrough who succeeded Charnock in 1693 obtained further concession from Prince Azimushshan and bought the three villages of Kalikata, Sutanuti and Gobindapur and within a decade the population of the settlement rose to 12,000. Sir Charles Eyre assumed the office of the first President of the British settlement in 1700 and hoisted the Union Jack in 1702 over the Fort that had been stealthily built in 1697. Aurangzeb's death in 1707, however, provided the British with the real opportunity for fortification, as well as expansion of the settlement. Surgeon Hamilton's mission in Delhi succeeded in persuading Aurangzeb's successor in 1716 to permit the British Company to purchase 38 villages around Calcutta.

The rapid industrial and commercial growth in the expanded settlement drew large number of people from all parts of the country. The growth in the population of the city was further accelerated by the consideration of safety and security in the settlement as against constant raids by Maratha bands in the neighbouring country-side, popularly known as *borgi*. After the plunderous raids of Shova Singh, which had wrought havoc in Midnapore, Hooghly and other adjoining areas of Bengal, came the devastating Maratha raids in 1742 that laid waste to the entire country-side of Bengal, west of the river Hooghly (Bagchi : 1939). In contrast with the prevailing instability in the country-side elaborate security measures were taken by the Company within the limits of its authority such as digging of Maratha ditch on its eastern fringe. It is not unnatural, therefore, to expect the people to come to the city for shelter and safety with liquid assets or moveable meterial possessions they were left with. According to an estimate by Holwel, the population of the city had reached nearly four lakhs by the middle of the 18th century A. D.

The smooth and steady growth in the population of Calcutta had a setback in 1756 when Nawab Serajuddaula challanged the arrogant look and menacing posture of the foreign traders and objected to their illegal fortifications. The clash between the British and the Nawab became inevitable and after an initial setback near Chitpur in north Calcutta on June 16, 1756 the Nawab's army captured the city with all its fortfications on June 18, 1756. The victorious Nawab appointed a Governor for Calcutta with his headquarters at Alipur and returned to Murshidabad after renaming the city as Alinagar. The Nawab left the city practically undisturbed including its British residents. He took with him only three Englishmen as prisoners.

The Nawab's rule over the city was very brief. A contingent of British forces arrived towards the end of the year from Madras and recaptured the settlement in December 1756. Taking the defeat as a big insult the Nawab prepared for a large scale war against the intruding foreigners. The British, however, apprehended the arrival of the Nawab's forces and were the first to march towards Murshidabad. Both the forces met near Plassy but the battle was won by the English without a fight because of the betrayal of Mir Jafar, the commander of the Nawab's forces, whose greed was fully utilised by the English. Thus not only the fate of the city fell firmly in the hands of the British but their victory provided them also with a key to the door of the entire country of which they ultimately became a sovereign power, and Calcutta remained the seat of their Government until it was shifted to Delhi after about a century.

The victory of the British over the Nawab and the expansion of their power with its nucleus at Calcutta led to the consolidation of their commercial and administrative interests and the further growth of the city. The super-imposed urbanity, utilising the human and material, resources drawn from a wide area in the country, in the interest of the colonial power, besides the geographical and other factors, set a pattern for the heterogenetic[1] growth of the city rather an orthogenetic one. The changing social, economic and political conditions in the country at large compelled the unemployed and induced the entrepreneur to march towards the urban centre of unprecedented character. The rise in the population of the city was in leaps and bounds.

Correct population figures of the city from time to time during its growth, since the beginning of the 18th century, remained a matter of conjecture until the first proper census in 1872. Estimates of the population figures during the period have, however, been made by various individuals from time to time since 1710 which are as follows[2] :

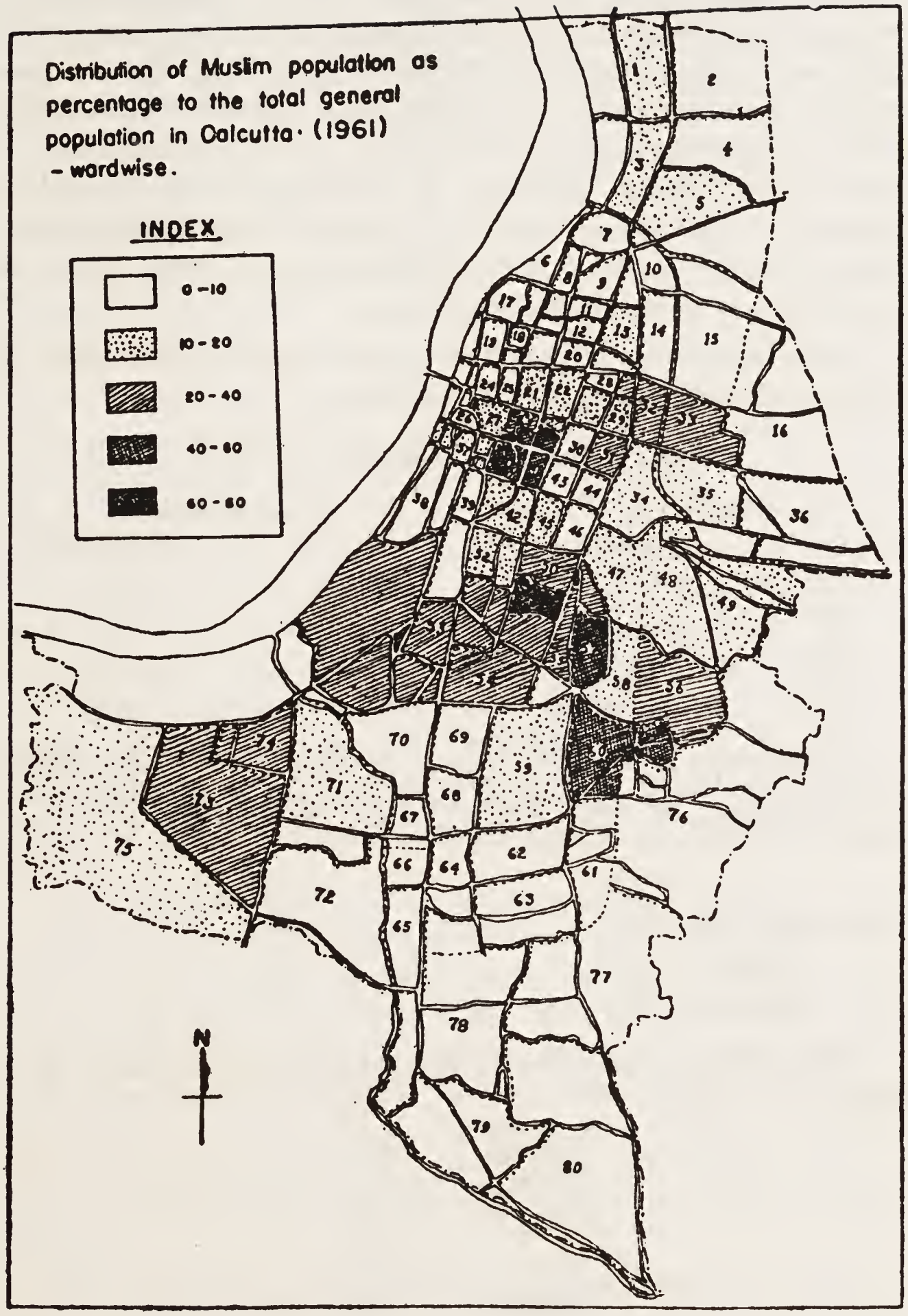
Table 1 : Population of Calcutta, 1710–1971

1710	12,000
1752 Holwel's estimate	409,000
1782 Mackintosh's estimate	500,000
1789 Grand Press estimate	600,000
1800 Chief Commissioner's estimate	500,000
1802 Chief Magistrate's estimate	600,000
1814 Sir E. Hyde's estimate	700,000
1815 E. India Gazetteer's estimate	500,000
1821 Assessor's estimate	230,502
1840 Simmi's estimate	361,000
1850 Chief Magistrate's estimate	413,000
1872 According to census	612,307
1891 According to census	682,303
1901 According to census	847,796
1911 According to census	896,067
1921 According to census	907,951
1931 According to census	1,196,734
1941 According to census	2,108,891
1951 According to census	2,548,644
1961 According to census	2,927,289
1971[3] According to census	3,148,746

1. As the population of the city having been drawn in from a wide hinterland has varied ethnic linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and is generally associated with the technical and commercial order, the city may be termed as heterogenetic one. This is unlike those cities that characterise the 'culture carried forward' i.e., orthogenetic ones.

2. 'Calcutta Past and Present' by P. C. Bagchi for populations figures upto 1850.

3. Census of India 1971 Pt. I, 1971—Supplement Provsional Population p. 50.


Distribution of Muslim population as percentage to the total general population in Calcutta (1961) - wardwise.
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0 - 10
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40 - 60
60 - 80
N

3

The boundaries of the city has also been constantly expanding from its early history and the present limits within the jurisdiction of the Calcutta Corporation constitutes an area of 36.92 sq. miles excluding Garden Reach Municipality and the area constituting Fort William. The Calcutta Metropolitan District (C.M.D.) as constituted in 1970 covers an area of 490 sq. miles and comprises the Calcutta and Howrah Corporation areas, 33 municipalities and 37 non-municipal urban localities extending south to north along both the banks of river Hooghly from Baruipur to Kanchrapara and Howrah to Bansberia[4]. The present study is, however, based on observations within the limits of the Calcutta Corporation as in 1961, as well as certain areas of Garden Reach Municipality.

Some idea of the upward trend in the density of population of Calcutta may be had from the following table :

Table 2 : Density of Population, 1921–1961

Year	Density Persons per sq. mile	
	Calcutta Corporation[5]	Total CMD
1921	26,499	4,601
1931	30,722	5,192
1941	54,527	8,807
1951	67,886	10,962
1961	73,642	13,727

Among other demographic features of the city is its predominantly male character. The male-female ratio of the total population as well as that of Hindus and Muslims are given below :

	Male	Female
Total population[6]	100	61
Hindus	100	65
Muslims	100	40

The linguistic composition of the population of Calcutta[7] is as follows :

Bengali	66%
Hindi	20%
Urdu	9%
Oriya	2%
Others	3%

4. Calcutta Metropolitan Development Authority (CMDA) is a statutory body set up under the President's Act 1970 (Central Act XVII of 1970).

5. All land within the administrative boundaries. Source : Census of West Bengal 1961, Vol. XVI Part II-A.

A comparative statement of the population major religions communities in Calcutta[8] is as follows :

Religion	Percentage to total population	
	1961	1951
Hindus	83.94	83.41
Muslims	12.78	12.00
Christians	1.82	2.98
Jains	0.58	0.46
Sikhs	0.51	0.56
Buddists	0.31	0.37
Others	0.06	0.22

MUSLIMS IN THE CITY

As it is evident, a very considerable proportion of the Muslims have been associated with the city from the very early period of its growth. A few names of places like Alipur that existed at the time of the advent of the English in the city suggests the presence of the Muslims around but very little traces of historic monuments in and around the city, except perhaps the ruins of a fort on the bank of Hooghly in north Calcutta,[9] show the traces of the impact of the days of the Nawab. The depredations of the Maratha in the adjoining areas of Midnapore and Hooghly affected the Muslims as it did the Hindus and they must have sought shelter in the city besides looking for the opportunities for employment. The victorious march of the Nawab's armies over the city and its capture in 1756, brought considerable number of Muslims and many of them must have settled here to stay on.

The difficulties imposed by the elaborate rules of pollution as also of considerable lack of tradition for urban mode of inter-action, particularly in a heterogeneous situation, among the Hindus, generally made them unsuitable for jobs like cooks, etc. Considerable freedom among Muslims in the sphere made their presence in the city inevitable and the lower classes among them were alone available for the services of personal and domestic nature. A few lanes and bye-lanes named after Khansamas, gaininig prosperity during the period, such as Chakkoo Khansama Lane, Panchu Khansama Lane, bear testimony to this fact.

The tradition for architectural work brought Muslims for work in

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6. Based on Census of India 1961, West Bengal District Census Handbook, Calcutta Vol. II, relating to 80 wards of Calcutta Corporation as in 1961.
7. Op. cit.
8. Op. cit.
9. Vide "Calcutta 1964 : a Social Survey", Bombay 1968 by N. K. Bose.

the field at a very large scale when the city was developing as a large industrial, commercial and administrative centre. Similarly trade in dry and seasonal fruits brought the Peshwari Muslims as well as green grocers from Bihar and U. P. ; trade in horse brought the Muslims from Alwar, Bharatpur and certain areas of the Punjab and Rajputana, who, along with the Ghosi and Gaddi of Uttar Pradesh, later monopolised the cattle and milk trade in the city. The hide and skin trade could not be handled by the Hindu traders so there was scope for the Punjabi Muslims as well as Ranki. (Iraqi) from Bihar and U. P. as also for a few Bengali and Tamil Muslims. The cultural trait of wearing tailored garments is generally associated with the advent of Muslims in the country. The presence of Muslim tailors in the city was, therefore, inevitable. Similarly the supply of meat to the foreigners as well as to others in the city depended largely upon a group of Muslims with the occupational background in the trade.

Among early traders are Memans from Kachch and Hallar areas in Gujarat as well as Bohras, both Shia and Sunni, as also the Khojas from the same state. They dealt in general merchandise and wholesale trade. Subsequently a few of them became exporters and importers as also industrialists of considerable repute. To these traders, particularly the Kachchi Memans, goes the credit of constructing the chief mosque (the Nakhoda Mosque) of the city in 1926 which is managed and maintained by them. Tamil Maraykar (seafaring traders) claim very old relationship with Bengal and try to substantiate their presence in Calcutta since the middle of the 18th century. The presence of their burial ground attached to a mosque built by them in the heart of the city, near Chittaranjan Avenue and Mahatma Gandhi Road crossing, leaves no doubt about the truth of their claim. In the absence of easy land communication they came in early days by country crafts, through sea coast. These crafts were also used for their voyage to other South East Asian countries. The Kshatriya Muslims of Delhi and other places in U. P. who call themselves Qaum-e-Punjabian of Delhi and Anwla, to be distinguished from the people of the Punjab, a business community in Central Calcutta, claim their association with the city from the middle of the 19th century particularly since the Sepoy Mutiny in 1857.

The Rajasthani Muslim groups of Nilgar, Manihar and sonar etc., who had some amount of interdependence with the Rajasthani Hindus for the practice of their traditional occupation, followed them to the city and settled in proximity to Burrabazar area where Rajasthani Hindus are largely concentrated.

The development of port and merchant fleet brought Muslims

from East Bengal and other coastal parts of the State. Book binding and allied jobs of daftary were chiefly manned by Muslims of yet another category from East Bengal, some of whom continue to be in the trade, while many of them returned to their native state after the partition of Bengal. Quite a few groups of Muslims drawn from a large area of the sub-continent had already established themselves in the rapidly growing city of Calcutta during the second half of the 18th and first half of the 19th centuries.

Thus we notice that inspite of the mutual dislike of the Muslims and the 'Ferengee' both were not only considerably dependent on each for employment and service respectively but also the specialised services of the Muslim groups were necessary for urban development. This dependence of the Muslims on the foreigners did not result immediately in the acquisiton of English on the part of the former mainly because the upper categories of Muslims suffered from a sense of hurt pride and had a feeling of superiority in their tradition while those at lower levels either shared the feelings of the upper categories or were at too low a level to make such a venture.

The struggle of 1857, commonly known as Sepoy Mutiny resulted in the crushing defeat and complete breaking down of the Muslims as they were the special target of British wrath. Many thousands of families in the towns and villages of north India were turned into destitutes as a punishment for their rebellion against the British Company and many of them had no alternative but to proceed to the growing urban centres for their existence. Many had to migrate to Calcutta to escape persecution by the local authorities and to get lost into the multitude and be forgotten. A few among the Churihars or Shishgars of Ghosh Bagan in Cossipure, the pastorialist groups of Saudagar patti at B. T. Road, the Qaum-e-Punjabian of Colootola and around and the Momins from Bihar and U. P. still retain family annecdotes to state how around 1857 their ancestors had escaped their villages and hiding by day and travelling by night had reached Calcutta to start their lives afresh.

The internment of the Mysore family after the defeat of Tipu Sultan in 1798 and the deposition of King Wajid Ali Shah of Awadh in February, 1856 [10] and the arrivals of their staff and retainers led to the

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10. The King's party reached Calcutta on the 6th of May, 1856. After a few days stay at Belgachia, a palace belonging to the Maharaja of Bardwan was chosen at Mochikhola, the present Garden Reach Road, where subsequently 18 palatial houses were built to accommodate the staff and retainers. Several of these buildings were acquired by South Eastern Railway for their offices. (vide 'Hazrat Wajid Ali Shah' by A. C. Bose, Shukla Printing Press, Lucknow, n.d.)

establishment of their respective settelements at Tollygunj and Metiaburj introduced or greatly reinforced a new category of Muslims in the city. The more prosperous Murshidabad family, the Dacca and Bogra families and several other people with a background of aristocracy that continued to receive British support for obvious reasons, established their headquarters in Calcutta either to deal with or to have closer contacts with the British Government. Quite a number of mosques, *imambaras* and *karbalas,* built by these settling nawabs and creation of a few trusts by them, in different parts of the city, go to show their involvement with the community and the city life. As many as 13 spacious mosques were built by Mysore family alone. The Murshidabad family belonging to Shia sect has built several such monuments in the north as well as in the central Calcutta including the famous Gole Kothi at Chitpur Road and a Karbala in Maniktala at Acharya Prafulla Chandra Road, similarly the famous imambara at Metiaburj and several mosques including the Shahi Mosque there owe their existence to the Awadh family at Metiaburj.

The presence of quite a number of shrines like *astanas, dargahs* and *mazars* are the evidence of the presence of saints, *sufis* and *pirs,* the sacred people, from the 18th century if not earlier. The Dargah of Hazrat Moula Ali Shah is stated to be more than 200 years old and is greatly revered by both Muslims and Hindus. The Qadria and Nizamia-Chishtia orders were established around the middle of the 19th century. The Naqshbandia order established its centre during the last quarter of the 19th century and the Haqqania order moved into the city at the beginning of the current century. The Warsia as well as the Chishita orders have passed three to four generations in the city[11].

Among the most flourishing Khanqahs have been the Qadria Kkanqah at Taltalla and Mufidul Islam Lane near Baniapukur. A few like the Naqshbandia Khanqah at Tiljala place are reported to have moved out of the city and have shifted to East Pakistan, since renamed Bangladesh.

This is in no way the complete picture of these various categories of people coming to settle in the city and to play their parts in the city life and least of all of the mystic orders. These orders have their impact on the city, for, quite a number of pirs having their Khanqah elsewhere in the country visit the city to enable their devotees or clients to meet them. We shall endeavour to give a considerably detailed picture of these orders and their role in the Muslim Society in subsequent pages.

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11. For a list of some of the main khanqahs and astanas, please see appendix 1,

The city of Calcutta is again an important arena of sectarian activities and socio-political movements among the Muslims of the country. One can easily notice the mosques belonging to almost all the sects of which we are aware in the country. Besides the dominant Sunni sects of *Barelvi* and *Deobandi* schools we come across the three Shia sects of Athna A'shari, Imami, and Imami Ismaili Shias, both the latter popularly known as Dawoodi Bohra and Agha Khani respectively and the Ahl-e-Hadith and the Ahmadia. The last mentioned is sometimes disowned by other Muslims who consider them to be outside the pale of Islam. We shall discuss in considerably detail the operation of these sects in the relevant chapter.

Calcutta has been an important centre of a number of social, political and religious movements of the Muslims as of the country in general. The Khilafat[12] Movement in early twenties primarily directed against British imperialism and its interest in the Muslim world had one of its most important centre in the city which persists almost in an institutional form, as an agency of social welfare among the Muslims of the city rather than of Eastern India. The Tableeghi Jamat[13] founded by Moulana Ilyas around 1921-22 has a large centre in Calcutta and the Socio-political activities of the Jamat-e-Islami for the whole of West Bengal and Orissa are directed from its regional centre in Calcutta [14]. This is just to give a general idea of the importance of Calcutta as an arena for enacting the socio-political drama by and within the Muslim community, and not to enumerate and describe all the associations of voluntary nature.

Since its assumption of a position of a seat of authority for eastern India, Calcutta has been a centre of education for Muslims both religions and secular. Madrasah-e-Aliya commonly known as 'Calcutta Madrasah', a unique institution of its kind in the whole of India, was established during the Governor-Generalship of Warren Hastings in 1780 at the request of the Muslims of the city. It has remained one of the most important centres of Arabic and Persian learning as also of Islamic learning in eastern India. In 1857 an English section was added to the Madrasah. The establishment of Madrasah-e-Aliya in 1780 and

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12. The local office of the Khilafat Committee was eslablisihed in 1918-19. The organization continues to function as a social welfare organization of the Muslims in the city.

13. The Tableeghi Jamat has its centre in the calcutta since 1942.

14. The Jama't was eastablished in Calcutta around 1941. The Chief of the region consisting of W. Bengal and Orissa is known as Ameer-e-jamat while the head of the zonal centres (halqe) are known as nazims, Calcutta and Howrah is divided into 13 such *halqas*.

of Fort William College in 1800 by Marquis Wellesley for the training of young English Officers, drew a very large number of scholars including Muslims from all over north India. Virtually the prose literature of standard Urdu vernacular owes its beginning to Calcutta where, within over three decades, nearly 100 Urdu books were published. These were mostly translations from Arabic and Persian by about 30 scholars[15] attached to the college. Another set of writers and poets had followed Nawab Wajid Ali Shah to Calcutta from Lucknow to stay with him during his internment. This gave impetus to literary and artistic activities. Wajid Ali Shah alone Published 45 books from Mochikhola (the present Garden Reach Road) at Metiaburj during his internment (Hashemi : '69). By the first quarter of the 19th century we find Muslim scholars[16] represented in the learned societies of the time such as Calcutta School Book Society (Ahmed : 65 : 21).

Calcutta has remained a very important centre for the publication of Urdu books and Islamic literature for catering to the needs of the whole of eastern India. The city is practically the main source for the supply of basic books, on many subjects including Islamic religion, to West Bengal, Asam, Orissa and to some extent to Bihar as well. Urdu journalism also owes its birth to the city where first newspaper Jam-i-Jahan Numa started publication[17] in 1822. Calcutta has retained its

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15. Some of the scholars who came to work at the Fort William College from different parts of India are Syed Bakhshish Ali Faizabadi, Mohammad Ali Ibn Nisar Ali, Syed Mansoor Ali Husaini, Fazal Ali Fazli, Mohammad Bakhsh, Mir Mohammad Ata khan Tahseen, Mir Aman, Mir Bahadur Ali Husaini, Mir Sher Ali Afsos, Haider Bakhsh Haidari, Mazhar Ali Khan Wela, Mirza Kazim Ali Jawan, Hafizuddin Bardwani. Khalil Ali Ashk, Mir Moinuddin Faiz, Basit Khan, Amanatullah Shaida, Mirza Lutf, Mirza Jan Tapish, Maulavi Ikram Ali, Mirza Moghal Nishan and Khawn Nemat, etc. (*vide* 'Unnisween Sadi Me Bengal Ka Urdu Adab' by J. N. Hashemi, Urdu Writer's Guild, Calcutta).

16. The first managing committee of the society for the year 1817-18 had its Muslim members Maulavi Aminullah, the Company's Vakil at Sadar Diwani Adalat and distinguished Persian and Ārabic scholars like Maulavi Karam Hussain, Maulavi Abdul Wahid and Maulavi Abdul Hamid along with Hindu scholars like Pandit Mrityunjay Vidyalankar, Radha Kanta Deb, Ramkamal Sen and Tarinicharan Mitra (*vide* 'Social Ideas and Social Change in Bengal 1818-1835' by A. F. Salahuddin Ahmed, Leiden 1965).

17. *Jam-e-jahan Numa* was the Urdu edition of *Samachar Darpan* and was also published in Persian. Some other newspapers of early 19th century published by Bengali Muslims from Calcutta were *Aina-i-Sikandar* (1833-1840), *Mah-i-Alam Afroz* (1833-1841) and *Sultan-ul-Akhbar* (1835-1841), also Calcutta Guide, *Manazirul Akhbar* and *Darus-Saltanat* were some other Urdu and Persian newspapers published from the city. *Shams-ul-Akhbar* and *Mirat-ul-Akhbar* were both Persian newspapers published by Bengali Hindus, the latter was edited by Ram Mohan Roy.

leading position in regard to publication of quite a number of Urdu dailies and periodicals. The printing type in which Urdu is printed is known as 'Calcutta type' irrespective of the place where the foundary has manufactured such a type. Moulana Mohammad Alis' 'Hamdard', Moulana Abul Kalam Azad's 'Al Hilal', Moulana Abdul Wasey Siddiqui's 'Rashad', Moulana Shaiq Ahmad Usmanis' 'Asr-e-jadid' and Moulana Malihabadis' 'Azad Hind' all published from Calcutta have been landmarks in the history of Urdu journalism in the country. Moulana Mohammad Alis' 'Comrade', an English journal of great repute during twenties and thirties of the current century was published from Calcutta[18].

This is not, as stated earlier, by far the exhaustive account of the role Calcutta plays in the life of the Muslim community in the city and its cultural hinterland. What is intended here is to give some idea of how the Muslims have got themselves involved into the life of this city systematically from the period of its early history and at present constitute the second largest religious community forming 12.78 percent of the total population as compared to 83.94 percent Hindus and 1.82 percent Christians while others like Jains, Sikhs, Buddhists etc. together constitute 1.46 percent (1961 census).

Although Calcutta is situated in the heart of Bengal, the character of its Muslim population reflects its all India or at least predominantly North India character as it is largely drawn from the entire hinterland of the port of Calcutta roughly reflecting higher numerical preponderence from the areas of comparatively closer distance from the city. Linguistically the Hindustani or Urdu speaking Muslims constitute 70 percent of the entire Muslim population or about 9 percent of the total population of the city. The next largest group is that of the Bengali Muslims followed by Rajasthani, Gujrati and Malayali groups. In the absence of exact figures relating to linguistic groups among the Muslims these estimates are based on mere observation. Urdu speaking people, however, include a considerable number from the delta region of Bengali speaking areas. Observing the intergenerational difference in language spoken it becomes evident that linguistic transformation has taken place due to certain factors including the dominant *para* influence as a result of co-residence in common localities. A reversal of the trend is also discernable at the upper levels where anxiety for greater identification with the state is also observable and some Urdu speaking children

18. Six urdu dailies Published from Calcutta are *Rozana Hind*, *Azad Hind Asr-i-Jadid*, *Imroz*, *Abshar* and *Ghazi*. *Sangam* another Calcutta Urdu daily has ceased its publication.

endeavour to adopt Bengali as a vernacular subject or as a second language where facilities for the same exists.

The concentration of Muslim population in different areas in the city has roughly followed regional and linguistic affinities. These spatial concentrations have undergone changes from time to time. The main areas of concentration[19] of Muslim population lie in the central districts comprising of Ward Nos. 50, 51, 53, 55, 57 and 60 around Park Circus extending upto Tapsia, a newly developing slum area; south-western districts extending from Kidderpur, consisting of 73, 74 and 75 wards, to Metiaburj extending upto Rajabagan and Burtalla within the Garden Reach Municipality where Bengali speaking Muslims predominate; around Mechuabazar, Colootola and Canning Street comprising of 23, 40 and 41 Wards where relatively affluent sections of various regional and linguistic backgrounds live. Comparatively smaller pockets of Muslim population is situated in Wards 31, 32 and 33 roughly comprising of Narkeldanga, Rajabazar and adjacent areas of Patwar Bagan and Parsi Bagan. Also a little northwards in Belgachia, Lockgate Road, Rajabagan around B.T. Road commonly known as Saudagar Patti where the former horse traders live and now pursue trade in milk and milch cattle, comprising of Ward No. 5 and still northwards in Cossipur extending upto a portion of Jheel Road. Some smaller Bustees of the Muslims are also situated in east Calcutta near Tangra known as Bibi Bagan and further eastward at New Tangra Road and also towards south-east at Motijheel near Convent Road in the Entally area. A small settlement of the Muslims is situated at Tollygunj around the Shahi mosque at D.P. Sasmal Road.

Thus a large number of heterogeneous groups of varying regional, linguistic, ethnic and occupational backgrounds characterise the Muslim population of cosmopolitan Calcutta, living in the midst of a predominantly Hindu population, the details of which are given in subsequent chapters. In spite of these differences and heterogeneity, certain common elements tend to weld them into a community. These common features are the basic tenets of a common religion with its daily, weekly and annual rituals of collective nature, performed in the mosque or *idgah* and such other ceremonies as *milad, majlis-e-iza, urs, sandal* processions and similar other ceremonies, either performed collectively or individually, where collective participation takes place. Some sort of psychological unity and a sense of common destiny as a result of a common Indian nationality is apparently visible and appears to have

19. *Vide* map of Calcutta showing the areas of concentration of the Muslim population.

been strengthened due to recent historical events that force them to cling together even more closely to meet the situation. The process that had started the withdrawal of the Muslims from south Calcutta during midforties as well as that of Hindu population from predominantly Muslim areas has continued particularly in the case of the Muslims. This tends to concentrate them in compact areas, although their occupational persuits continue to affiliate them with the areas beyond their residence.

This common identity as a result of a common religion as practiced, subject to sectarian variations, and a sort of psychological unity and a growing sense of common destiny within the socio-political life of the country is partly expressed in the process of *Urduisation* to a considerable extent among the non-Hindustani speaking Muslims, drawn not only from the Indo-Aryan speaking areas of north and north-west India but also the Dravidian speaking south, as well as from the delta region of which Calcutta is a natural part. Even those who have retained their mother tongue such as Bengali, Rajasthani, Malayali and Tamil tend to become bilingual and adopt Hindustani as a second language for conversation outside their homes or with people other than their own linguistic group.

A form of rustic Hindustani dialect sometimes referred to as Gulabi Urdu[20] spoken among the older inhabitants, particularly those belonging to backward sections of Muslims, which has taken note of Bengali and English syntactical elements and vocabularies is an interesting feature pointing on the one hand to a long association of the speakers within the city, and on the other a process of the development of a new dialect in a contact situation of cosmopolitan nature.

These and many other facts go to show that a chance erected city like that of Calcutta which came into being to serve the merchantile and colonial interests of the British, having a predominantly Hindu character of its population has been an important centre for the Muslims of India. It has virtually been a centre for most spheres of their activities economic, social, educational, political and religious. Muslims have been deeply entrenched in the life of the city, constituting a part of its society in many ways.

With this general idea of our field situation we shall endeavour to present in considerable detail some of the main features of the segmentation of Muslim society before attempting at a discussion of some of

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20. Some Urdu newspapers periodically devote a column or two by way of fun and frolic to the dialect. Journalists like Ibrahim Hosh write this Calcutta dialect with fluency and perfect ease.

the aspects of its organization, including the pattern of inter-ethnic stratification.

SUMMARY

The chance erected city of Calcutta, the field of our study, developed into a large commercial and industrial centre to serve the colonial interest of the British. The geographical location of the area now constituting the city, with its close proximity to a natural harbour, the prospect of vast hinterland to serve, as also relative peace and stability in the settlement, compared to unstable conditions, during early 18th century due to Maratha depredations and systematic weakening of the Mughal power, led to a rapid growth in its population.

Of the diverse groups drawn from its hinterland and areas far beyond it, within the country, the involvement of the Muslims with the city has been fairly deep and systematic. They were drawn into the city for rendering certain specialised services in the urban situation, for trade and with the establishment of Fort William College, the Calcutta Madrasah and other institutions to work as teachers, scholars and writers. A number of aristocratic families were also introduced into the city as a result of the internment of the Mysore and the Awadh families and the arrival of the Murshidabad and other families and their retainers. Various khanqahi orders moved into the city and several sects established their centres. The presence of several hundred mosques and other shrines in different districts belonging to different sects and several khanqahs belonging to different *silsilas* point to the direction.

Thus within this Hindu dominated city in the heart of Bengal, Calcutta developed into a very important centre of education and social and cultural activities of the Muslims in North India rather the whole of India. A special Urdu dialect known as 'Gulabi Urdu', which has certain Bengali and English elements, developed as a result of the intermixing of diverse Muslim groups, including Bengali speaking from surrounding areas. The settlements of the groups in different parts of the city and their specialization in various activities continue to be reflected in the contemporary life.

3

Segments of Society : National, Regional & Ethnic Components

We had a general idea of the concept of society in Islam to be of egalitarian nature. We also acquainted ourselves with the city of Calcutta, the field of our study, characterised by a dominant Hindu milieu where Muslims constitute the second largest community. We shall now proceed to observe the Muslim society and its segments to examine the features that are of significance in delineating the structural pattern of the Muslim society, keeping in view the pressures of the traditional model of the dominant society around.

The population of the massive urban centre of the size of Calcutta is often referred to as cosmopolitan, bearing an amorphous character. Traditional occupations coexist with a large variety of new occupations operating in a system of purely monetary economy in the industrial and commercial setting. This leads to the formation of classes cutting across traditional mode of stratification and modifying aspects of patron-client relationship that characterises the agricultural mode of production in the rural economy. Among other sets of factors that add to the complexity of the situation are the working of the modern political system with its base in the city, emergence of a variety of voluntary organizations embracing many spheres of activities and growth of a circle of people endeavouring to imbibe west oriented modern rationalism in their social behavionr.

The complexities caused by these and similar other factors in the analysis of stable social segments are, however, not insurmountable. The massive urban complex of the city of Calcutta is but a small island within the vast ocean of rural hinterland and even an area extending far beyond it. This is spread over a fairly large part of the country from which the city's population has been drawn and continues to interact with, in many ways. The base of the population and its interaction with the base, helps sustaining the basic form of the social life of its citizens particularly those aspects which relate to the structural framework of the society in a wider sense. Industrialization and mecha-

nization has only been partial in this city, as for example, aeroplanes and hand-pulled carts and rickshaws go together. This partial mechanization leaves much scope for the operation of hereditary occupations in the maintenance of services in the city although the mode of clientship has undergone considerable modification.

Restricting our observation to the Muslims of the city we may attempt at certain kinds of classification of their population. The first major distinction is obviously based on nationality or citizenship i.e., between the citizens and the resident aliens. In spite of the much emphasised Islamic brotherhood giving the impression of knitting Muslims throughout the globe into a solid block, the distinction between the nationals sharing a common territory, as we shall see later, is real and significant. The nationals again retain much of their regional backgrounds within the country of which language generally acts as an external symbol. Finally within the framework of different regions in the country the population is significantly divided into groups bearing ethnic character. These, as we shall see, are either based on decent or descent-cum-occupational background. The ethnic boundaries do not of course always coincide with the regional boundaries and a few ethnic groups may be seen to have been drawn in from more than one region. The regional framework, however, remains significant for most of the groups and even in cases where they have a wider distribution they operate within the regional framework.

Cutting across these divisions based on national, regional and ethnic backgrounds there are other kinds of divisions based on sects and mystic orders within the larger organisation of the Islamic great tradition[1] which we shall see in subsequent chapters. Presently we shall restrict ourselves to the description of the segments of society based on nationality, region and ethnic identity within the spheres of the regions.

THE MUSLIM ALIENS

The first mojor distinction, as pointed out earlier, is evident between the citizens or nationals and the aliens. The aliens do not constitute a single group and having been drawn in from different countries have different national backgrounds. Among the Muslim resident aliens who pursue some kinds of trade in the city and reside either with family members or without them are: 1. Afghans, 2. Iranians and 3. Others (including Arabs, Tibetans, Chinese, etc.

1. I have used the term great tradition in the sense Prof. Robert Redfield has used in his book 'Peasant Society and Culture', (*vide* chap, on 'The Social Organization of Tradition').

These groups do not only differ in physical appearance from the citizens, as among themselves, but also in the mode of interaction with the latter in the neighbourhood, in welfare activities and in the total life of the community and the city. The only significant sphere of interaction at community level remains the mosque and the biannual mass congregations. The case of Pakistanis with whom apart from a shared history, linguistic, ethnic and even kinship ties exist is, however, different. Also quite a few groups drawn from the areas now constituting Pakistan, both East and West, continue to reside in the city since long before the division of the country and enjoy full rights of Indian citizenship. They also interact with other citizens in regional framework and within the limits on Indian nationality. The aliens do not generally possess the sense of belonging and of common destiny with the agglomeration that goes to form the Muslim community of Calcutta which is so characteristic of the citizens.

Most numerous of these alien Muslims are the Afghan. Census (1961) figures relating to their population in the city is a gross underestimation. Their number is estimated to be somewhere around 4000 individuals as evident from their Eid gatherings in Calcutta Maidan to perform their folk dance. They hail from four different provinces of Afghanistan namely, Jalalabad, Qandhar, Mazarsharif and Ghazni and are immediately distinguishable by their physical appearance and distinctive form of dress from the crowd of pedestrians. Almost all Afghans are adult males and live in small groups mostly, though not always, concentrated in areas of Muslim population. They continue to reside in areas vacated by local Muslims such as Manicktala, mostly around mosques, more or less undisturbed. Their main occupation is money lending, a profession strictly forbidden in Islam, and they depend largely on physical strength, for its successful conduct, which, in fact, is seldom used. Among themselves the Afghans are further grouped mainly on the basis of the provinces they come from within their country some being held in higher esteem than others.

Afghans live comparatively unmindful of their neighbourhood and interaction between them and the local Muslims in voluntary or involuntary associations, as with other sections of the city's population, is virtually absent. The stamp of foreignness on them is so conspicuous that the Islamic idea of brotherhood, in spite of verbal assertions, remains inoperative beyond their participation in mass congregations in mosques. The lack of tradition for any joint sociopolitical endeavour partly explains their non-participation in the Pakhtoon movement, started by some Pashtu speaking Pathans from the tribal areas of the N. W. F. P., in spite of persistent efforts to draw them

in the movement which would have apparently been consistent with their national interest. The Afghans are seldom seen participating in the marriage or funeral ceremonies of their Muslim neighbours although the last mentioned is a religious duty, *farz-e-kefaya,* to be fulfilled by a few individuals of each household or group in the neighbourhood on behalf of all its members.

Cases of marriage of the Afghans with local Muslim women are of rare occurrence but even these few cases do not provide the Afghans with fuller rights and obligations of a kin in the family of the women. The relationship remains confined to the individuals bound in the wedlock. The woman thus married to the Afghan is given up, more or less completely, by the family of her orientation and is supposed to be taken away to the country of the husband when he returns home. The off-springs of such a marriage, particularly female, are not married to local male but to one of the Afghan origin. In such cases, however, the pattern of relationship between the two families are somewhat different.

Certain restrictions imposed by the Afghan Government has minimised the already rare cases of marriage of the Afghans in India and, under the prevalent rules, an Afghan is said to be required to return to his motherland after certain specified period of stay in India to join his family at home. He is also said to be usually not permitted to bring his family to India.

The number of Iranians and still more of the Arabs and other groups of foreigners is so small and they are so much diffused spatially that their presence in the city is not felt to any significant extent. The census report of 1961, giving the number of the Iranians and the Arabs as only 42 each, is again a gross under-estimate. The Tibetan Muslims have probably entered into the country after 1961 when the census was taken but quite a few of them are seen attending Friday mass congregations in the central areas of the city. There has, however, been a systematic decline in the number of the Iranian and the Arab residents in the city since 1921 and 1931 as has also been in the case of the Afghan population.

Among the alien Muslims, the Iranians are alone associated with the citizens, both Muslims and non-Muslims, in a literary and cultural organization, of voluntary nature, known as the 'Iran Society', established in 1943. The small Iranian community consisting of about 20 families belongs to the *Athna Ashari Shia* sect and is observed participating in some of the rituals and ceremonies of the sect such as relating to Moharram Id-e-Ghadir Nauroz etc., performed in the city. The pattern of interaction of these groups with the citizens as also among

themselves is otherwise the same as between the Afghans and the Muslim citizens in Calcutta.

THE MUSLIM CITIZENS

The denotation of the term citizen in socio-political sense is clear enough to need any clarification and applies to those as well who originally came from areas now constituting Pakistan, both East and West, (East Pakistan has since been renamed as Bangladesh and is a sovereign State) and continue to inhabit the city, often in groups of their own. Their entire social linkage through kinship and family ties, may therefore come within the purview of the study. The category may, thus, loosely conotate the entire population drawn in from the whole of undivided India that has shared a common political history within the sub-continent.

The broad characteristic feature that distinguishes this cotegory from the aliens is the consciousness of sharing a common destiny within a common nationhood. This consciousness is reflected in some amount of responsibilities and obligations in regard to the city's Muslim population and finds expression in the form of quite a few social welfare organizations directed towards the fulfilment of the needs of the community as a whole. These are of the nature of orphanages [2], *bait-ul-mals* [3], *maktabs* and *madrasahs* [4] and organizations that undertake the responsibilities for the burial [5] of those coreligionists dying in a state of destitution, take care [6] of the sick and render relief to the members of the community when any calamity befalls them. Though the services made available by these organisations are in no way adequate and reflect the state of the generally impoverished economy of the community, they are sustained mainly by charity such as *zakat* and *fitra*, etc. These organizations go to show a general concern among Muslims of the city for the community and a sense of belonging to it.

This sense of belonging involving assumption of responsibility, to the extent possible, for the community and regular cooperative action in several fields, within the national framework is the result of sharing many aspects of culture, besides religion. These aspects can be understood within the context of space and may be easily distinguished from lip service to solidarity based on universal brotherhood for all Muslims the

2. See appendix I for a list of some of the main institutions of the kind in the city.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.

world over. Although this kind of solidarity is sometimes manifested in the expression of sympathy in the events of natural calamity such as earthquakes in Turkey or floods in Iran or elsewhere in the Muslim world, it remains on the abstract level. This does not involve regular cooperative action and assumption of responsibility to any extent.

It is thus evident that universal brotherhood has serious limitations and a group, for its operation as a community in an effective manner, is dependent on factors that are linked with a territorial base in a historical sense. Common nationality or continued association within a spatial context imposes a degree of cohesion that results in the sustenance of a variety of welfare organizations and emergence of agencies that assume responsibilities when a part of it faces crisis.

Within the larger framework of Indian nationhood the region plays a very important part and the indelible mark of region, the Muslim in the city have been drawn from within the subcontinent, is not obscured. Quite a large number of ethnic groups, that constitute the elements of the Muslim society, as of course of other societies, in the city have not only strong regional base but many of them also bear exclusive regional character i.e., they do not have ethnic affinity beyond the region they come from. The sub-continent may, thus, be arbitrarily divided into four broad regions that have contributed, differentially, to the Muslim population in the city. These are (1) North Western, (2) Western, (3) Southern and (4) Northern regions each being subdivided into areas within the framework of which ethnic groups and their interactional patterns may be understood in a certain measure.

The convergence of a large number of groups of diverse backgrounds at a limited concentric space for a considerable period of time has provided opportunity for contacts and certain features such as emergence of a dialect give evidence of its effects, yet the characteristics of the regions, the people come from, are immediately noticeable among the respective groups in matters like food habits, mode of dress, common or related language etc., and often reflect in a number of surnames in spite of common nomenclature system followed at least on a national scales. Quite often physical features give evidence of the regional affiliation of the people. The Peshawaris, the Kashmiris, the Punjabis, the Rajasthanis and the South Indians can be immediately distinguished on account of their physical appearance. Certain regional groups, or fairly good part of those groups, continue to wear their traditional dress, such as the Meo, the Rajasthani, the Ghosi and the Sheikhjee are seen with their turbans on their heads. Rajasthani women wear *ghaghra*, different groups among them wearing ghaghras of

different specified colours, the Bohra wear their own traditional dress and the Tamilians and the Malayali are usually seen in their skirt-like *lungi*, though many of their group members have discarded the traditional form of their dress. Languages or dialects of these groups conform invariably to the regional pattern. Dietary habits of regional character appear to have undergone only marginal adjustments on account of the rationing system and availability of the items for food. The Muslim population in the city can thus be categorised in terms of these broad regional characteristics which affiliate them with the rest of the population drawn from the same regions. This of course does not obscure their identity as Muslims and their membership of the community in the city. It is from within these regional groups that we can identify quite a number of ethnic groups that are of considerable significance in the organization of their society whcih we shall describe briefly.

REGIONS

1. *North Western Region* : The region has been taken here to be constituting of former N.W.F.P., the Punjab and Kashmir, either forming parts of India or within Pakistani territory or its occupation.

(i) Quite a few ethnic groups have been drawn in from the North Western Frontier Province of undivided India. Significant among them are Syed, Pakhtoon, Awan, Kakazai, Kalal (transporters) and Kashmiri-Peshawari. The history of association of these groups with the city goes back to over a century and a half or even earlier, when trade in dry fruits brought several of their groups either as traders or as transporters. The differentiation in occupational backgrounds ceased to be meaningful in the changed situation when mules were no longer required for transportation purposes and they found scope in the trade itself. The division of the country, as a result of which the areas of their origin went to Pakistan, has resulted in the reduction of their number in the city.

(a) The Syed among the Pashtu speaking people in the city are very small in number consisting of only a few families. Without having been wedded to any traditional occupation, they form the priestly class, greatly revered among all the groups from the region as well as many others and are allowed the privilege of hypergamy. A few of them are engaged in trade, including fruit trade the main occupation of several other groups from the region, Buzurg Shah, a greatly revered *pir* of the Peshawaris (a name given collectively to several groups from N.W.F.P.), died recently in Calcutta.

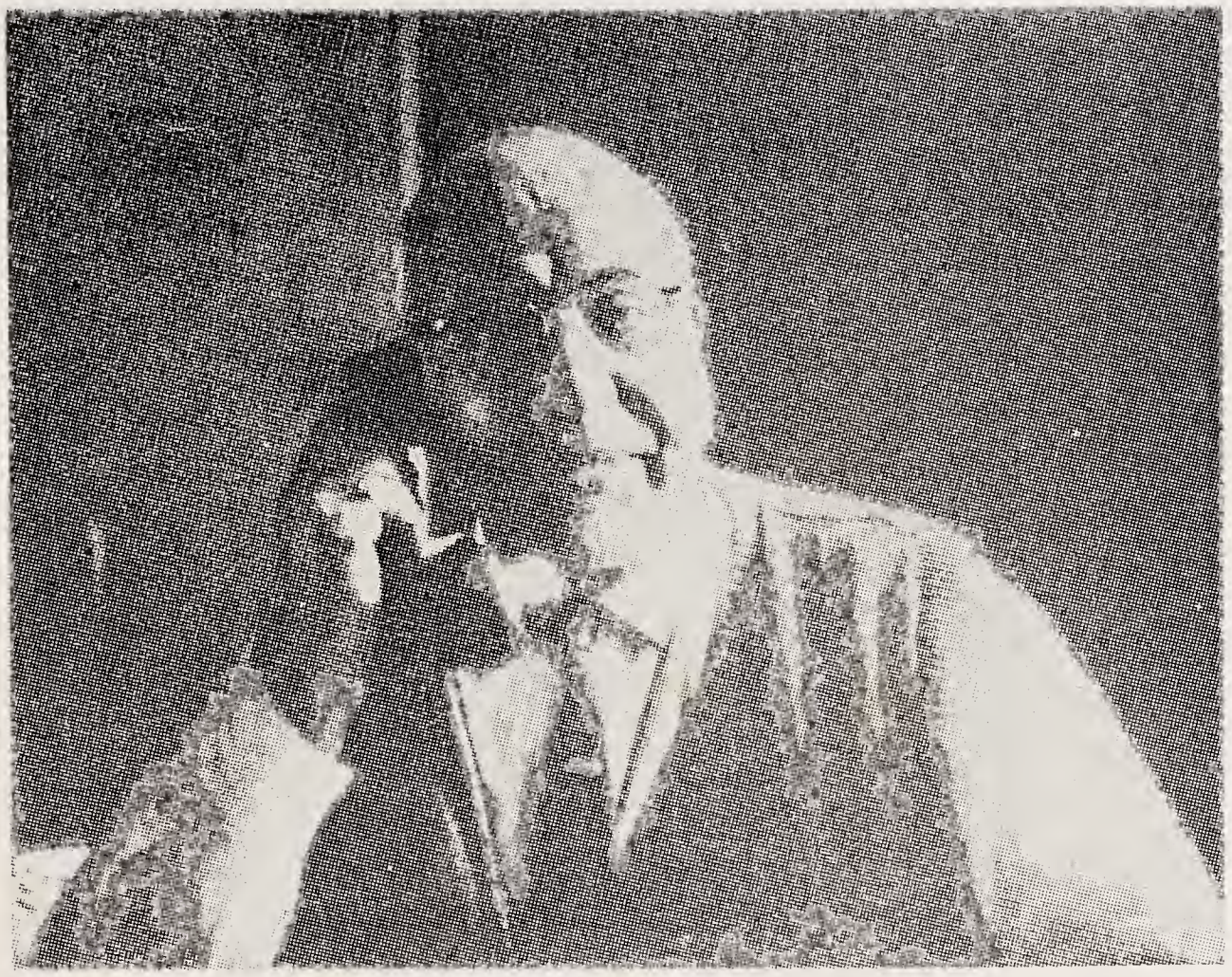
(b) The Pakhtoon constitute a small group from the rural tribal areas of the N.W.F.P. With a population of about 200 individuals including some 30 families in the city they claim to have a traditional martial background. In the city, however, they are engaged in small technical and non-technical jobs such as motor driving and the services of darwans. The larger section among those in the city belongs to Osman Khail while some others belong to Yusuf Zai and Khattak tribes of the Pathans. Being strictly endogamous, they take special care not to allow their daughters to marry outside the tribe or khail. In case of necessity men can, however, bring brides from such other groups who are prepared to offer them. They generally practice a preferential form of marriage within a limited range of relatives known as *Kufv*.

(c) The Awans consisting of only 15 families claim Arab ancestry and a status equal to the Sheikh elsewhere. In their home region they have been cultivator-landowners but in Calcutta they are mainly engaged in fruit trade. They practice endogamy with considerable relaxation of the practice in case of several other groups of identical regional background particularly since the difficulties imposed upon the groups after the division of the country.

(d) The Kakazai are urbanized group owing its origin to the great Zai tribe in N. W. F. P. and Afghanistan. They claim to be Sheikhs, probably meaning their status, but there is no doubt about their Pathan origin from whom they have separated some years ago lossing their intimate relationship with the larger tribal organization. Their population consists of 30 families in Calcutta and all are engaged in fruit trade in and around Mechuabazar or elsewhere in the city. They have also been endogamous with slight relaxation of the rules only recently under the pressure of changed socio-political condition in the country.

(e) The Kalal have traditionally been transporters in their region and along with that pursued the occupation of muleteers or i.e., transportation on the back of mules, in the most difficult mountaineous terrain in the whole of the north-western region including Swat, Kaferistan, Dir, Chitral and parts of Kashmir. They probably brought their countrymen, with their merchandise on their mules, before the railways were built and later, when mechanical transports rendered them superfluous, they took to trading for which there was ample scope in the city. Among the Peshawari they predominate numerically consisting of some 50 families. Endogamy has been strictly practiced by them until its recent relation in favour of others Peshawari groups.

(f) The Kashmiri-Peshawari consisting of some 12 families are



An Iranian businessman

A group of Afghans dancing on Eid day

A Tibetan Muslim girl

Chinese Muslims

A Kashmiri businessman

A group of Peshawaris

A leader of the Qaum-e-Panjabian-e-Delhi

A Tamilian businessman

those Kashmiris who migrated to the city after having settled in Peshawar a long time ago. They probably have a traditional occupational background of green grocers and have continued to preserve their ethnic identity through endogamy. Linguistically, however, they have ceased to be Kashmiris adopting Pushtu as their mother tongue, and are distinguished from other Kashmiris in Calcutta who are directly from Kashmir. Kashmiri-Peshawari are also mainly in the fruit trade.

The population of Muslims from the N.W.F.P. in the city has sharply declined in recent years and is at present around 1000. Their monopoly of the fruit trade has recently been successfully challenged by the Muslim Raies from Bihar and Hindu Khattiks. Some of their groups are of tribal origin while others have occupational backgrounds. Excepting the Syed and the Pakhtoon all those in fruit trade have a common panchayat more of the nature of guild. While a few cases of intermarriages are available yet by and large each group remains endogamous. The Syed and the Pakhtoon practice hypergamy taking care not to allow their daughters to be married outside their groups. The role of the Peshawaris in the social affairs of the Muslims in the city, at one time quite considerable, has almost receded into insignificance.

(ii) Within the north Western Region we may include the Punjab both East and West, forming parts of India and Pakistan. While a few isolated families belonging to different backgrounds may be present in the city, the decisive bulk of the Punjabis in Calcutta consisting of about five to six hundred individuals including 65 to 70 families constitute a homogeneous group, claiming mostly Rajput and Kshatria[7] origins. A few are also Jats[8]. The group as a whole practices endogamy and prefers to be called Sheikh. They are mostly in leather, rubber and foot wear trade as well as in plastic business. They are no longer in the transport business which was once their speciality. A few, however, still deal in motor spares etc. and their number has greatly dwindled since the division of the country. The homogeneity of the group is affected by segmentation on sectarian lines, the group having been divided into Sunni, *Ahl-e-Hadith* and the *Ahmadia* sects, the last one having its origin in the Punjab. Marriage relationships between the Ahmadia and the non-Ahmadia sects are avoided while Sunni and Ahl-e-Hadith sects intermarry. Although traditional group

7. Such surnames as *Vora*, *Sahgal*, *Wadhawan*, *Maggo* and *Pasricha* etc. some of which are common to Hindu caste from the region, suggest their earlier affiliations to caste.

8. A few families claiming to be Sah Jats were come across.

panchayat does not exist some sort of informal get-together takes place whenever necessary and common problems are discussed and resolved. Usually the occasion of marriage or occurrence of death or any such ceremony in the house of a group member provides such an opportunity.

(iii) Kashmir may also be considered a part of the North Western Region. Kashmiri Muslims in the city constitute largely a migratory population and are rarely with families. Their number fluctuates between 250 to 500 individuals according to seasonal variations and is least in summer and rainy seasons. The Kashmiri society, it was learnt, is highly segmented on ethnic and occupational lines with elaborate rules of intergroup behaviour. Those in Calcutta are both from artisan and non-artisan groups engaged in dealing in Kashmiri artifacts or making it locally or repairing shawl and making embroidery works, etc. The association of the Kashmiris with the city is over a century old and a few are known to have married and settled in the city, yet this is considered outside the pattern of their social behaviour and considering their number they are not of much significance.

2. *Western Region*: This region has been taken here to denote two distinct cultural areas of Rajasthan and Gujarat from where we have sizable groups in the city's Muslim population. While in each of the two areas a variety of dialects are spoken, the languages spoken among the groups from these areas are broadly categorised into Rajasthani or Marwari and Gujarati, respectively.

(i) The population of the Muslims in Calcutta drawn from Rajasthan is estimated on the basis of the statements of several reliable informants from amongst them to be over 1000 individuals and consists of a number of groups with occupational background of traditional nature. They are strictly endogamous and have strong caste organizations that function effectively. Unlike Kashmiri Muslims the Rajasthani Muslims are mostly in family groups, mainly concentrated around the Hindu Marwari areas of Burrabazar with whom they have been occupationally linked. While the functional relationship of some of these groups in the urban pattern of economy still continues with the Rajasthani Hindus in a large measure, they have shifted their residence during the last two decades to the adjoining Muslim localities. The occupational groups are named and are classified as follows :

A. Groups that are identified by the traditional dress of their women, all of whom wear *ghaghra* (skirt), but each group has specified colour of ghaghra for itself.

(a) Shekhawati (wearing red skirt)—nilgar (persuing the occupation of dying clothes)

(b) Madi (wearing black skirts)—persuing the occupation of dying clothes.
(c) Manihar — — bangle makers
(d) Sonar — — goldsmiths
(e) Lohar — — blacksmiths
(f) Dhobi — — washermen
(g) Teli — — oil pressers

B. Groups whose women do not wear *ghaghra* but veil themselves differently.
(h) Besati. — — hawkers, pedlers and traders.

A considerable section of several of these groups continue to pursue their traditional occupation, with varying degrees of success in their respective fields. For example the business of dying and printing cloth provides scope to hang on to the traditional calling, though not very comfortably, while the occupation of bangle making is under severe strain due to the changing fashion of the affluent Marwari Hindu women who have been their main customers. Those having the traditional occupation of Lohar (blacksmithy) and Teli (oil pressing) have, however, had to abandon for whatever is available including manual labour. Each group is organised on the basis of clan or *gotra* which is strictly exogamous while the group as a whole maintains endogamy.

(ii) From the Gujarat area of the Western Region are drawn quite a few ethnic and ethnic-cum-sectarian groups and each one of them functions as a well knit group with its respective internal organization, separate mosques or community centres (particularly in case of sectarian groups), separate burial grounds and exclusive agencies for welfare work among the group members. The Shia sectarian groups have strong group leadership of hereditary nature. Each one of the group is endogamous, the rules of which are so strictly imposed on fellow members that in case of a few groups, belonging to the Shia sects, the offender is liable to ex-communication or expulsion. The groups are as follows :

(a) Ismaili Shia popularly known as Dawoodi Bohra, a sectarian-cum-ethnic group are mainly drawn from Ahmedabad and Jamnagar. Unlike other Gujarati groups they have persistently registered steady growth in their population in the city, a trend that continues even after the formation of Pakistan. Following a directive from their chief, the *Dai,* or the spokesman or agent of the Imam who is yet to appear, at Bombay, they have shown great interest in investment in business and

small industries, and no odds appear to be insurmountable to them in this direction. From merely 25 individuals in 1889, their number grew to 350 in 1951 and reached 500 in 1935. By 1953 it registered a five fold increase reaching around 2500[9] and at present it is estimated to be over 3000[10] individuals. A group primarily engaged in trade and small industries, and though mainly sectarian, has a homogeneous ethnic background, reported to be belonging to a high ranking Hindu caste, before entering into the fold of Islam. The group lays emphasis on strict following of *shariat* and some of its members claim to have come from Yemen where their supreme leader *Dai-el-Mutaq* came from, several hundred years ago and in whose progeny the Dai'ship remains until to-day. The group has its mosque at Pollock street around which its population in the city is concentrated. An institution like Saifi Hall in the city goes to the credit of the group.

(b) Imami Ismaili Shia, another Shia sect, that follows the Agha Khan as its living Imam and supreme leader, is a small group in the city consisting of 325 individuals including some 40 families out of a total population of 30,000 throughout the world. Popularly known as Khoja, they claim conversion from Brahmin caste of Gujarat. Some of the surnames like Valji, Dossani, etc., retained by its members give evidence of their background. The main occupation of the group in the city is trade. Their prayer hall is known as Jama't Khana, the keeper of which is known as *mukhia-kamaria* or chief assistant. A photograph of His Highness the Agha Khan, is reported to be adoring the prayer hall which is not open to members of other sects. The group accepts the shariat as valid but is not bound by it. The rules of shariat to be accepted for operation are subject to modifications and relaxations by the living Iman, the Agha Khan. The traditional exclusiveness of the group is reported to be undergoing changes throughout the country particularly in Bombay where they are mainly concentrated. In Calcutta the Dossani family headed by late Khan Bahadur Dossani brought the group in contact with several voluntary organizations and made it participate in some of the socio-cultural activities of the Muslims in the city particularly during the last three decades. The welfare activities of the group is often extended to Muslims belonging to other sects as well. Marriage outside the group is prohibited and the offender is liable to expulsion from the group.

(c) Sunni Bohra, as their name suggests, have the same ethnic

9. As per estimate of Moulana Hasan Bhaie, Amil or representative of the Dai-e-Mutlaq in Calcutta in 1969. This is stated to be based on the demographic record of the community he maintains as a part of his duty.

10. Op. cit.

origin as the Dawoodi Bohra and only on account of the difference in sect they form a separate endogamous group with sectarian affiliation to a wider section of the Muslims in the city. Sunni Bohras are among the earliest Gujarati Muslim groups to come to the city, probably around 1857 and their population in Calcutta was at its maximum in late forties of the current century when it started declining until at present it is estimated to be consisting of 1500 individuals including some 400 families grouped under lineages that use common surnames[11]. Once a very prosperous community as businessmen their position has sharply declined in recent years, though they still hold on to trade of various kinds. The group has its members who, however, freely participate in major social welfare activities for all Muslims in the city. They have a separate burial ground and a large *mosafirkhana* at Lower Chitpur Road was constructed by one of the leading members of the group in 1889.

(d) *Meman*[12] (Halai) are from Kathiawar, Rajkote, Porbander and Jamnagar areas in Gujarat and claim to have entered into the fold of Islam several centuries ago from a background of the ancient Khatria caste of Lohana and Mota that were original inhabitants of Sind before settling in Gujarat. Numbering about 250 in Calcutta they retain some of the surnames suggest their origin and affinities[13]. Their group organization is called *Jamat* and is fairly effective in dealing with the affairs of the group and relationship of its members. Those who violate the rules of endogamy are considered to have gone down on the social scale and are known as *bissar* as against those who are unmixed and are known as *Chokhe* or *Sudh*. The former loose the right to hold offices in the group organization. Women brought from outside by their group members are called *bake* to be distinguished by women from within the group. The main occupation of the group has been trade of one kind or the other.

(e) *Meman* (Kachchi), though a section of the Meman com-

11. Some of the surnames used by sunni Bohra are *Jeeva, Mamooji, Salehjee, Mahpara, Parek, Nanavati, Kharwa, Abuvat, Karodia, Vouda, Zadwat* and *Akhujee*. etc.

12. Meman is probably derived from the term *mehman* meaning guest. The name was most probably given to the first batch of converts from the Lohana and Mota castemen to Islam by their spiritual guide Syed Yusufuddin with whom they stayed as guest on their way to Dwarka for pilgrimage, according to annecdotes current within the community. Syed Yusufuddin is stated to be sixth in the line of descent from Hazrat Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jeelnani.

13. Those in Calcutta use such surnames as *Chitalwala, Navinwala, Noorani, Koonda, Sokhani, Makra, Panwala* and *Vichchi* while besides these some of the more common surnames elsewhere are *Kaluri, Makrani, Godil, Motiwala, Boora, Bhadelia, Soinia, Udi, Bhagar, Chotana, Patel* and *Dhada*, etc.

munity with the same story of origin as the Halai Meman, are mainly from the Kachch area of Gujarat and form a separate endogamous group in the city and elsewhere. Consisting of about 200 individuals including 42 families they have fairly long history of association with Calcutta and the credit of building Nakhoda Mosque, the chief mosque of the city, and of being its sole trustees, goes to them. They have a separate burial ground which is in common with the Halai. A peculiarity of the Kachchi Meman in Calcutta is that although chokhe enjoy greater prestige they have been reduced to a minority within the group as a whole and the bisser predominate. Out of a total of 42 families, at the time of investigation, in Calcutta as many as 30 were bisser and only 12 had remained chokhe. The right of the bisser to serve as office bearers in the group organization was being debated. Some of the surnames[14] used by the members of the group are in common with those of the Halai while some others differ. Most members of the group are in business while a few are lawyers and doctors.

3. *Southern Region :* Of the Dravidian speaking Muslims in Calcutta the Malayali and the Tamilians are in substantial groups. The Kanadi and Telegu speaking Muslims, the other Dravidian groups are too few in number to be of significance as groups.

(i) The Malayali-speaking Muslims from Malabar, Tellichery, Kasergode and Cannanore districts of Kerala are the most numerous of the South Indian Muslims in Calcutta. Numbering nearly 5000 they are mostly from Malabar district and are divided into two major divisions according to which their system of inheritance, succession and residence pattern in the area of their origin is governed. Roughly, those from northern Malabar follow a modified form of *marumakka-thayam* system and those from the southern part of the district are governed by *makkathayam* with considerable adjustments. The modified form of the system of inheritance and succession appears to be a regional characteristic rather than ethnic. Though predominantly Mopla the Muslims from Kerala in the city are composed of the following ethnic categories :

(a) *Thangal*—The term applies to the group with highest ascribed status among the Malayali Muslims with the same connotative and denotative implications as applied to Syed among other regional groups. The ritualistic functional details may slightly vary from region to region but status position does not alter in any measure on account

14. Some of the surnames used by the Kachchi Meman are *Patel, Vatao, Agwani, Jharwani* and *Soi*, etc.

of their being descendents of the Prophet. The Thangals are very few in number and are often as visitors within the community. They are a separate endogamous group enjoying the privileges of hypergamy.

(b) *Musalliyar*, another Malayali group has the traditional function of rendering services in the ritual aspect of religion namely as employées in the mosque as *imams* and *moazzins* and sometimes as teachers in *maktabs*. They are also reported to have taken to cultivation as well in their home area. In Calcutta, however, they are very few in number and besides being employed in their traditional occupations they are also engaged as employees in small business establishments of fellow Malayali Muslims in the city.

(c) *Mapila* or Mopla claim descent from early Arab settlers in Kerala, though local admixture is also admitted. They constitute the bulk of the Malayali Muslim population in the city and are engaged in a variety of small business like dry fish, tailoring, running tea shops and eating houses of modest size, dealing in cane works and khas-khas curtains, etc.

(d) *Rowther*, originally Tamilians, but having settled in Kerala have found their way to the city. Like Musalliyar they are also very few in number. Occupational background of the Rowther having been inland trade, in Calcutta they are engaged in the same kind of occupational pursuits as the Moplas.

(e) *Keyi* are a group with trading background and are from Cannanore district of Kerala. In Calcutta they comprise of only a few individuals within the Malayali Muslim community and besides being engaged in trade they are employed in commercial establishments.

The bulk of the Malayali Muslim population in Calcutta lives detatched from families. Deliberate attempts on the part of a few of their leading members to persuade them to bring their families in the city has yielded results to the extent that we find about 50 Muslim Malayali families in the city within a total population of nearly 5000 individuals. A few of them have locally married also while most of them go back home to join their families at certain intervals. The groups are of endogamous nature and even those who come from the area where the modified form of marumakkathayam is applied to residential patterns and matrilocal residence is reported to be followed are residing in neo-local residence in the city. They, however, continue to be matronymic. A formal voluntary organization, the Kerala Muslim Association, looks into the socio-economic interest of the Malayali speaking Muslims and keeps necessary information about the members of the groups.

(ii) The Tamil speaking Muslims numbering less than 500 in Calcutta are all detatched from family though their association with the city is claimed to be more than a century old. Mostly engaged in trade of various kinds, they are in constant living touch with their home in Tamil Nadu where they visit to join their families. Three main ethnic categories of endogamous nature in Calcutta found among Tamil speaking Muslims are as follows :

(a) *Maraykar* who have a traditional background of navigation and trading on the sea coast. An important trading group among Indian merchant class in South East Asian countries they own a few merchant houses in Calcutta mainly dealing in Madras made textiles. They have a mosque of their own in central Calcutta with which a burial ground is also attached which is open to other Tamil speaking groups belonging to Shafei school of jurisprudence within the Sunni sect.

(b) *Rowther* are inland tradars and have a tradition of moving on horse back with their merchandise. In Calcutta they are either pursuing trade in textiles in the same way as the Maraykar do or are employed in the trade.

(c) *Labbai* are most numerous of all the Tamil speaking Muslims in the city. Traditionally they are said to be serving in mosques either as *imams* or *moazzins* or as teachers in primary schools or *maktabs*. They have also been in weaving and agricultural occupations but in Calcutta they are small traders or are employed in shops and establishments owned by other Tamil speaking Muslims.

Although the three Tamil speaking Muslim ethnic groups identified in the city are seldom with their families and kins they constitute separate endogamous ethnic groups in their home region and their relationship in the city is confined to their respective groups. They have no voluntary organizations of the kind we notice among the Malayali speaking Muslims with whom they are in more intimate social relationship than with Muslims from other regions. They, however, generally participate in the social and religious ceremonies such as marriage, death and *milad* in their neighbourhood and invite other Muslims to participate in religious ceremonies celebrated by them. The invitees comprise of those who are within the range of their business contacts or with whom reciprocal relationship exists mainly within the class context and in the neighbourhood.

Among the reasons for comparatively less frequent social contact of the Dravidian speaking Muslims with others are the difficulties imposed upon them by their languages that are completely unrelated

A member of the Dawoodi Bohra community

Eid Namaz

Rajasthani Muslim ladies of Shekhawati (Red Skirt) group

Rajasthani nilgar of Madi (Black Skirt) group

Mansoori cotton carders

Kharadi engaged in fine wood-work

Green grocer (Raie) selling fruits in a fruit market

Shah (faqir) offering fateha on behalf of devotees at a shrine in Calcutta.

to any of the languages spoken by others ; belonging as they do to Shafei sect (or more correctly to school of jurisprudence) their rituals vary in considerable detail ; the social system of a considerable section among them bears elements of matriarchy that results in their being detatched from family in the city. Although they have acquired a working knowledge of Urdu, generally they do not become proficient enough to go beyond a certain limit. Their own languages Tamil or Malayali remain completely unintelligible to their neighbours. The elements of matriarchy that they, or a considerable section among them, share within the region has a restraining affect on their women to accompany them.

4. *Northern Region* : The Northern Region has been taken here to mean the valleys of the Ganges and the Jamuna extending to the Haryanvi and Brij speaking areas that include Mathura, Alwar, Bharatpur and Mewat upto the borders of Rajasthan and in fact the entire area constituting the natural hinterland of Calcutta. The other most important part of the region is the delta region of the Ganges and the Brahmaputra where Bengali is spoken as against Hindustani or Urdu of one form or other or its allied dialects in the entire Gangetic valley.

It is this Northern Region that contributes to the overwhelmingly largest number or the decisive bulk of the Muslim population as well as the maximum number of ethnic groups of varied backgrounds. Let us categorise these groups into blocks, for the sake of convenience, according to the nature of their backgrounds e.g., (i) those claiming foreign origin, (ii) those entering into the fold of Islam from castes of higher status, (iii) those with a background of traditional occupations and (iv) those with traditional occupation generally considered 'unclean'.

(i) Groups claiming descent from ancestors of foreign origin, having no fixed or specified traditional occupations, not organized on the basis of any group panchyat and represented in most sects. These groups in the city though drawn from the Northern Region, are found throughout the country and are not confined to any specific region.

(a) *Syed*—The descendants of the Prophet's daughter Hazrat Fatima and Hazrat Ali. Those in the city are mainly from U. P., Bihar, W. Bengal and also from other parts of the region. Though quite a large number of surnames like Jafari, Rizvi, Fatimi and Mir etc., is used among them they are divided into two main sects of *Athna A'shari Shia* and *Ahl-e-Sunnat wal Jama't*. Although they are very small as a group, nowhere they are seen to be living in compact

group and are widely diffused in the city. A few of them are pir or hereditary heads of the khanqahs but all the Syeds are not pir. The Murshidabad family as well as quite a few among the descendants of the retainers of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah settled around Matiaburj are among those who claim to be Syed by descent and belong to Shia sect Pirs, however, are always Sunni and staunch Hanafi.

(b) *Sheikh*—The term is apparently very misleading for it is generally applied to a large number of groups of varying backgrounds both wedded to occupations and free from it. This is probably because in Arabic the term means leader, chief and respectable person. In specific sense, however, it means the associates of the Prophet, particularly the first three Caliphs and their descendents. In India quite a number of groups assumed the surname of Sheikh to indicate the respectability[15] of their status either at the time of conversion, in preference to their Hindu surnames or later in course of a 'social mobility movement' of the kind they were accustomed to, during their pre-Islamic past. Here the term is used to indicate the category in the specific sense only those claiming descent from the *Sahaba* ; the associates of the Prophet including first three Caliphs usually bearing such surnames as Siddiqui, Farooqi, Usmani, etc. Like the Syed they are also widely diffused and have no centrifugal or local organisation of any kind to rally them around.

(c) *Mughal*—A very small group within the category of groups without specified occupational background bearing the surname of Mirza and sometimes of Baig are regarded as the descendants of the former ruling class. They are also widely diffused in the city and are divided into two main sections adhering either of Athna Ashari Shia or Sunni sect. The descendants of the Awadh family at Metiaburj and a few among the descendants of the retainers of the Mysore family around Tellygunj belong to the Shia sect.

(d) *Pathan*—Basically having a tribal background the Pathans in the city have nothing left of their original tribal organization, and no other organization to replace it. The clan differentiations among the Pakhtoons from N. W. F. P. such as the Osman Khail, Khattak, Yusuf Zai, Ghar Zai, Shinwari and Afridi, etc., is no longer conspicuously emphasised and rarely remembered among the Pathans in the city drawn from the Northern Region. The Pathan of all denominations are considered as a group distinguished by *Khan*[16] as a surname

15. The Khatria Muslims such as Qaum-e-Punjabian, the Qasab, the Momin and a number of other peasant classes sometimes assume *Sheikh* as their surname which is usually prefixed with the name. The Qasab are often known as Sheikh *Ilmi*.

16. Those converted from Rajput caste also adopt *Khan* as their surname.

and like other groups in the category are not wedded to any traditional occupation, are widely diffused specially or organizationally within the city.

(ii) Groups of indigenous origin, drawn from superior Hindu castes, having some sort of group organization often taking shape of a formalised associations :

(a) *Qaum-e-Punjabian* (Delhi) are a trading community originally from the Punjab but came to Calcutta after having settled in Delhi for a very long time. They have a population of about 750 individuals in the city mostly in family groups and all with only a few exceptions reside in central Calcutta around Colootola Street. The group claims to have entered into the fold of Islam from its Khatria background. Many of their surnames[17] still used substantiate the claim. On account of practicing strict endogamy almost all the families within the group are interrelated in some way or the other. A few among them prefer to be called as *Sheikh* and have adopted this as their surname.

(b) *Qaum-e-Punjabian* (Anwla)[18]—the group has a similar background as of those from Delhi except that before coming to Calcutta they had settled in western Uttar Pradesh mainly in Anwla. In spite of identical ethnic origin they operate as a separate endogamous group and have separate formal group organisation to look after the affairs of the group. Their population in the city consists of 550 individuals including a little over 100 families.

(c) *Rajputs*—Muslims drawn from the Rajput castes are very few in number and are mostly from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. They are however not organized on the basis of any kind of group organization. Muslims of Rajput origin usually adopt *khan* as their surname.

(d) *Mallik*—The group known as Mallik is mainly from the four contiguous districts of Bihar namels Patna, Gaya, Monghyr and Shahabad. An estimate of their population in Calcutta is around 5000 including about 500 families mostly belonging to Sunni Hanafi sect. Though no caste panchayat or any organization to replace it is observable, strong disapproval of violation of the rules of endogamy has a restraining effect on those members who may tend to undermine it. Though a few members of their group have tried to prove through some of their writings that they are Hashemi Syeds yet their linkage

17. Such surnames as *Chandna, Chavla, Chabra, Baghpati, Batla, Batra, Badi, Adhuria, Kathuria, Khera, Kalia, Medirata, Topa, Naugola, Jumlana, Malik* and *Lohia etc.*, are retained by the members of the group. Sheikh is a recent addition.

18. Some of the common surnames of the group are *Soleja, Chabra, Medirata* and *Khera*.

with a fixed territory and insistence on the maintenance of ethnic purity[19] as well as strong sense of unity as expressed in their sectarian homogeneity are among the factors that suggest to their entry into the fold of Jslam during very early times from a high status tribe-caste group, or at least on account of the nature of their internal organization they can be grouped within the category.

(iii) Groups with a background of tarditional occupations, with traditional group organizations or panchayats of varying strength. This category again may be divided into two main sub-categories according to whether they have entirely abandoned their caste occupations to adopt a variety of new occupations or pursue their traditional occupations at least partially.

A. Groups that do not pursue their traditional occupations in Calcutta but continue to do so elsewhere.

(a) *Momins* (Ansari) weavers—They constitute the bulk of the Muslim population in the city accounting for, roughly, more than half of the total population. The large number of sections in which they were found to be divided by W. Crook (1896) and Ibbetson (1881) no longer appears to be of any significance and they constitute a single group under a subsequently adopted surname 'Ansari' which is either used regularly with the name or to denote their ethnic identity when they are required ty do so. The purity of descent is very much emphasised and those without admixture are distinguished as *nakched* from the mixed ones. The caste panchayat no longer exists in traditional form but adjusts itself in some sort of organization of members drawn either from a spatial background of village or contiguous villages and/or living in the neighbourhood to tackle with group problems. The numerical dominance of the group has shown in recent years a strong tendency of asserting itself in quite a number of institutions of the Muslims in the city as also as representatives of Muslims dominated areas in the State Legislature and in civic bodies, etc.

(b) *Raki, Ranki* (Iraqi) distillers—Commonly known as kalal they have a traditional background of distilling which has been abandoned in the city. Besides having engaged in a variety of trade they have a fair portion of the hide and skin trade in their hands.

B. Groups, with occupational backgrounds, that continue to pursue

19. Some of the marriage songs known as *ghom* enjoin on the newly wed couple not to allow their progeny to get mixed up with non-Malliks and to marry within the group in all circumstances (*vide* Tareckh-e- Malik, by Abdul Halim, Halimee Press, Calcutta).

their respective traditional occupations besides adopting other occupations having generally strong group organizations.

(a) *Darzi* or tailors—The Bengali speaking tailors have a fairly large population mainly concentrated around Metiaburj within the Garden Reach Municipal area and extending beyond it. Quite a few of their surnames[20] are typical of the delta region of Bengal. Their group organizations centre round a *pada* chief known as *matbar*. They are divided into two main sects Hanafi Sunni and Ahl-e-Hadith, the former predominates.

(b) *Darzi* or tailors—The Hindutani or Urdu speaking tailors are mainly from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and widely distributed in the city. They constitute a separate endogamous group as distinct from the Bengali speaking tailors. The surname adopted by them, though seldom used is *Idrisi*.

(c) *Kharadi* or wood workers as distinct from carpenters. The Kharadi only carve out toys and other articles from the wood. They are mainly from Bihar and U. P.

(d) *Qasab* or butchers—They are progressively adopting *Qureshi* as their surname, though many of them still retain Sheikh and use it with their name. Group panchayat among them is very strong which is headed by hereditary Sardar. The entire Qureshi population in the city are divided into 12 panchayats including two in the urban area of Howrah.

(e) *Chik* or butchers of goat—Although they have also adopted Qureshi as their surname and pursue identical occupation yet they refrain from slaughtering cow like the Qasab and maintain separate endogamous group with separate panchayats. Headed by hereditary choudhury the panchayats are so strong that members seldom dare defy it.

(f) *Raie* or green grocers—Ordinarily known as *subzifrosh* or *kunjra*, they have adopted a surname of Raie and constitute probably largest group next to Ansari. They have 22 panchayats (*malats*) in the city which have started having elected chiefs instead of hereditary ones.

(g) *Besati* or pedlars of stationary articles. They have no longer restricted their business to pedlary. A few of their members are shop-owners and several others have entered into other occupations.

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20. Such surnames as *Molla, Khan, Haldar, Thandar, Mallick, Sheikh, Mali Purkayat, Mondal, Ghazi, Kazi (Qazi) & Baidya* were found to be used among the tailoring community in and around Metiaburj.

(h) *Mansoori* or cotton carders—They are spread throughout the city and are mainly engaged in cotton carding and making of bedding requisites.

(i) *Churihar* (Shishgar) glass bangle makers—Mostly concentrated in North Calcutta at Ghosh Bagan near Cossipur and also distributed at different parts of city are facing a great decline in their trade due to mechanisation of glass industry yet quite a few among them still cling on to their traditional mode of production to serve the marginal sections. Others have tried to adopt other occupations. The women of the group have, however, kept up the tradition of supplying glass bangles to their customers from house to house. These are often purchased from the market for resale. Group panchayat functions among them though in considerably weeker form than others. In recent years they have adopted Siddiqui as their surname.

(j) *Nikari* or fish mongers—They are a purely Bengali speaking group. They do not catch fish but only sell them. Mainly from 24 Parganas they are also drawn from other districts of West Bengal.

(k) *Dafali* or drum makers—Besides making drums they make and repair some other musical instruments in which strings and membranes are used. They also act as 'priests' for some lower categories of people and are supposed to control certain spirits believed to be disturbing the women of these categories of people. In Uttar Pradesh they also keep the genealogies of other groups like Ghosi. They specially rever Ghazi Baba whose tomb is situated at Bahraich.

(l) *Hajjam* or barbers—Besides doing the job of hair cutting they are also supposed to be *jarrah* or surgeons. The latter function is reduced to a smaller group within them on the basis of experience and finds scope of operation among a limited sphere of people not adequately exposed to modern medicine and surgery. A new surname has been adopted by the group namely '*Sulaimani*' which is however not frequently used by its members.

(m) *Dhobi* or washermen—They are spread throughout the city and organized under group panchayats mainly based on the areas of their origin. The new surname adopted by the group is Hawari.

(n) *Chidimar* or trappers and dealers in birds settled in more or less compact groups at Narkeldanga, Metiaburj and other areas of the city engaged in dealing in birds of various kinds besides pursuing other occupation. They prefer to call themselves Mirshikar to distinguish themselves from their Hindu counterparts. In recent years they have adopted Siddiqui as their surname.

(o) *Qalanders* or those who pursue the occupation of entertaining people with monkey dance and sometimes of bears as well. They live in compact areas around Park Circus and other parts of the city.

(p) *Faqir* or mendicants who call themselves Shah and besides begging are employed in *dargahs* and *astanas* of saints and pirs to perform some rituals like fateha and for other services under the management.

(q) *Patwa* or painters—A purely Bengali group having a tradition of scrol painting and making images during their pre-Islamic past have continued to stick to the job as far as it is available. They also paint and distemper houses and make dolls for sale in markets and fairs. A section of the Patwas have recently been reconverted to Hinduism. Muslim Patwas are residing in the Muslim areas of Narkeldanga and the Hindu section resides near Amherst Street, Doctors' Lane and at Kalighat in the midst of Hindu population.

(r) *Sheikhjee*—Dairy farmers and dealers in cattle. Settled mainly around Lock Gate Road near B. T. Road in North Calcutta they have smaller settlements at Metiaburj and elsewhere in and around the city they run their dairies and until a few years ago had been important suppliers of milk in the city. The trade, however, is still held on though on a mitigated scale.

(s) *Meo* are from the well known tribe of Gurgaon and Mewat and pursue the occupation of dairy including selling dairy products in the city and are also employed in the dairies of Sheikhjee. Their social system is characterised by clan organisation[21]. The group as a whole is endogamous while the clans are exogamous. Mother's lineage (thumb) is also avoided.

(t) *Ghosi*—They also pursue the same occupation as the Sheikhjee and the Meo. They are also divided into a number of clans[22] of exogamous nature while the group is endogamous. Drawn from Kanpur, Allahabad and Aligarh they live at Barrackpur, Metiaburj, Chitpur and at Pilkhana in Howrah City.

(iv) Groups engaged in occupations that are generally considered 'unclean'.

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21. In Calcutta the Meo belong to four different clans or gotras, namely, *Dhemrode, Dhaingal, Pahat* and *Saingal* other clans that exist in the home area include *Chereklode, Dulode, Gaurwal, Naiwar, Dairwal, Bagodia, Tomar, Jadu, Pallakra*, etc.

22. Some of the clans among the Ghosi are *Thene, Totar, Banu, Melode, Banbhan, Khalari, Semaria, Desrodh, Konga, Bharane, Ledar, Bhoosikhana, Chopra, Rah* and *Chouhan*, etc.

(a) *Lal Begi*—They are engaged in their traditional occupation of sweeping and scavanging. Some of them are also cooks in Christian houses.

Though a few more groups of specific background having small numerical strength may have remained unidentified, yet the above groups by and large cover the decisive bulk and the main body of the Muslim population in the city. Also a small part of the Muslim population may not easily appear to be fitting into a definite ethnic category as a result of some amount of inter-ethnic admixture or a strong desire among a few economically better off from among certain occupational groups that are not held in high social esteem to conceal their background and to improve their status through marriage among higher status groups of inferior economic position. But it is not very difficult to identify them as belonging to one or the other known ethnic groups.

Separate population figures of all the respective groups are not available and the current census reports are not of much help in this regard but it is evident that Momins (Ansar) constitute by far the largest group followed by the Raie, the Darzi, mainly concentrated around Metiaburj and the Qureshi. The Khoja (Imami Ismaili Shia), the Nikari (fish monger) and the Mirshikar are among the smaller groups. Economically more dominant within the community are the Kshatriya and Rajput Muslims namely the Qaum-e-Punjabian groups of Delhi and Uttar Pradesh, the Khoja and Meman and Bohra groups from Gujarat. Among the groups with occupational background the Iraqi have fair share of hide and skin trade in their hands and are relatively prosperous. A section of the Momin has also attained substantial economic prosperity and is tending to produce a group, though still very small, of educated class that was unknown a few decades ago. The position of the groups claiming foreign descent in terms of economic dominance or even of political significance is on the decline. Class structure, of course, does not strictly constitute in a way as to embrace the entire ethnic groups within its fold but ethnic groups as a whole are of significance in forming classes.

Thus far we have endeavoured to 'map out' the main ethnic categories within the Muslim population in Calcutta within the frame-work of their regional backgrounds. The extent of endogamy practised by these individual ethnic groups will be illustrated in table nos. 3 and 4 based on a random sample drawn from five groups, at least one selected from each of the four clusters or blocks of groups arranged on the basis of certain common characteristics.

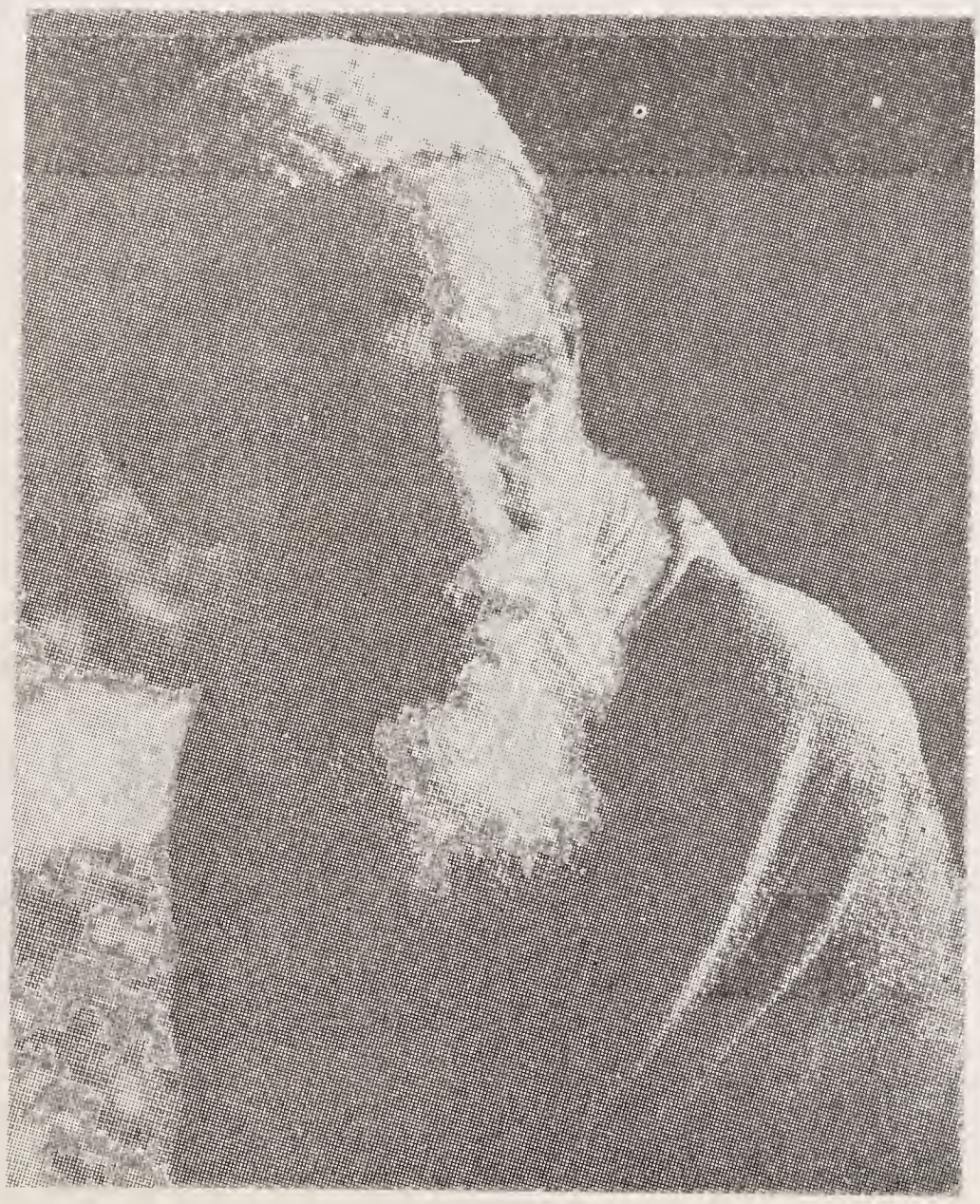
Mirshikar selling birds

Embroidery workers at work

An old milkman (Sheikhjee) in North Calcutta

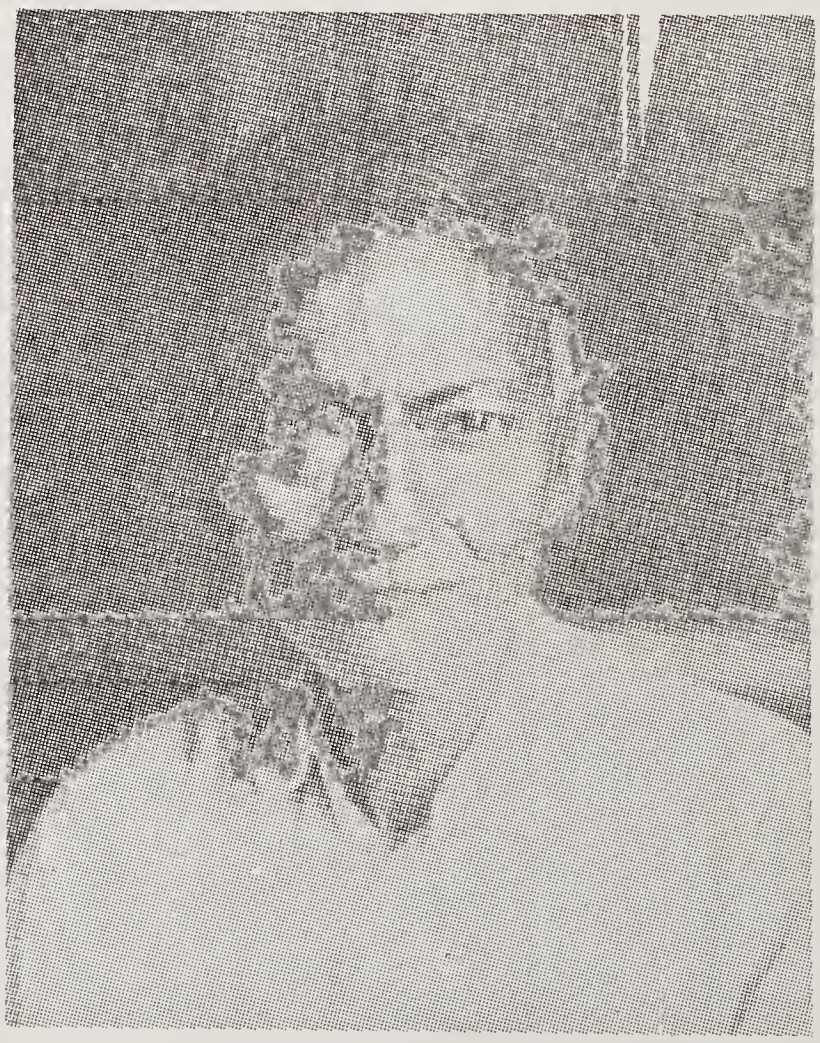
A milkman and his buffalo

Tailors of Metiaburj in a workshop.



An old tailor

Kabuli Drummer



A Patua old man

Before discussing the interrelationship of these groups in terms of certain traits relevant to the system of caste we shall endeavour to present a picture of other kinds of segmentation of the Muslim Society in Calcutta based on sects and the significance of mystic orders in the context.

SUMMARY

A significant segmentation of the Muslim population in Calcutta is along national, regional or linguistic and ethnic lines. Resident aliens like the Afghans, the Iranians, the Tibetans and the Chinese etc., are obviously not a cohesive group among themselves and lack in the feeling of sharing a common history as compared to the nationals of the country. This reflects in the absence of any positive evidence on the part of the resident aliens to suggest the normal obligations imposed on account of association in a common neighbourhood or of any responsibility with regard to the nationals. The nationals, on the other hand, give evidence of a consciousness of sharing a feeling of common destiny, through participation in welfare and other similar activities.

The nationals are further segmented on the basis of the region they have been drawn from, which is broadly categorised into (i) North Western, (ii) Western, (iii) Southern and (iv) Northern regions. The last mentioned includes the Gangetic delta and subscribes to the decisive bulk of the Muslim population in the city. The Urdu (Hindustani) speaking alone constitute over 70% of the Muslim population. Each region is reflected in certain common traits of culture such as dress, food habits, common or related dialects, etc., though certain elements suggesting a degree of cohesiveness of the community is also observable among the groups as a whole.

Generally within the context of regional backgrounds but not always so, the Muslim population is very significantly divided into ethnic groups of varied backgrounds. These are either based on a history of descent linking them either with groups of early Muslim settlers in the country or with Hindu castes. A large number of these groups have a tradition of pursuing a hereditary occupation variously graded 'high' or 'low', 'clean' or 'unclean' either given up in the city or is continued to be pursued. The groups are generally seen endeavouring to maintain their group boundaries through endogamy and often possess a group organization to exercise social control.

4

Segments of Society : Sects

The Islamic religion as propagated by Prophet Mohammad is supposed to be the main source of guidance to Muslim society. It is based on three main sources namely (i) the *Quran*, belived to be the revealed word of God, (ii) the *Hadith* or tradition i.e., the recorded sayings of the Prophet and (iii) the work of theologians consisting of the interpretation of the Quran and the Hadith during the early period of Islam. (iv) *Ijma'* or the concensus of the companions of the Prophet or the learned Muslim scholars of subsequent periods, is also an authoritative source on the aspects that are not clear either from the Quran or from the Hadith. (v) *Qiyas* or analogical deductions from all the three sources has also been an important method of arriving at a decision with regard to a new situation. Though the *ijma'* and the *qiyas* do not receive universal acceptance among the Muslims, all these taken together constitute the Islamic Great Tradition.

It is based on these that a complex of beliefs and practices known as the pillars or fundamentals of Islam receive, in a broad sense, universal acceptance. These are (1) *tawheed* or belief in the unity of God, (2) *risalat* or belief in the Prophethood of Mohammad and (3) belief in after-life. These are followed by observances of (4) *namaz*, (5) fasting and (6) *zakat* at fixed rates for all, having a saving above certain level ; and for the Shia sect (7) belief in *Imam*. The eighth point is *jehad* or right to struggle under conditions that impose restriction in the ovservance of these fundamentals.

The body of laws that is supposed to be the code of conduct of Muslim individuals and society is known as *shariat*. This has been broadly classified into such categories as (i) obligatory, (ii) prescriptive, (iii) permissible, (iv) disapproved and (v) tabood. The differences in the interpretation of shariat generally occur within the range of three intermediate categories i.e., prescriptive, permissive and dis-

approved, providing explanation for (1) diversity within the Muslim society, (2) adjustment of Islam with other civilizations and at least in a partial sense, (3) the emergence of sects. The last mentioned also represent dissentions and divisions in the varying interpretation of traditions and of historical developments as also in response to changing environments. Presently we shall restrict ourselves to the description of the main sects in the city and then we shall proceed to observe how these sects affect different ethnic groups at various levels of the society. The main sects in our field situation are as follows :

1. *Ahl-e-Sunnat-wal-jamat* or *Sunni*, as they are generally called, are by far the largest of the Muslim sects in India as also in Calcutta. As distinguished from Shia sects they believe in the elected caliphate or successorship to the Prophet, against the theory of hereditary or nominated successorship upheld by the former. The history of this bifurcation goes back to the time of the Prophet's death. The Sunni among themselves are subdivided according to the schools of jurisprudence that differ in the interpretation of the details of the shariat and certain methods of arriving at decisions in the new situation. As for example there is a sharp difference between *Hanafi* and *Shafei* schools of jurisprudence with regard to ijma' or arriving at a consensus of the learned people at a given period, the former reject this method while the latter accept it as valid. The description of the different schools of jurisprudence need not detain us here. We shall, however, describe the main schools of theology that have assumed the position of sub-sects within the Sunni sect and are of significance in our field situation. These are mainly identified as Barelvi and Deobandi schools and also schools at Nadva and Ferengi Mahal both the latter at Lucknow.

(a) The Barelvi deriving their name from the school of theology at Bareli (U. P.) are most numerous of the Sunni subsects. They tend to accept without much criticism the social and religious condition as has passed on to the masses from the previous generation. In fact they condone the presence of quite a large amount of elements of the 'little tradition'[1] of the Muslim peasants and tend to assimilate them. Claiming to follow the Hanafi school of jurisprudence they consider the *baia't* or clientship of the pir as essential. *Ijtehad* through either ijma' or qiyas is generally not acceptable to the great bulk of them

1. The terms 'great tradition' and 'little tradition' have been borrowed from R. Redfield. 'Little tradition' here, however, means to include all aspects of culture that are extra-Islamic or outside Islamic great tradition.

in arriving at decisions in a new situation and quite a number of customary practices and rituals relating to birth, marriage and death which are 'extra-Islamic' remain in vogue without much of questioning. A number of socio-religious ceremonies such as *milad*, *fateha*, *sandal*, *tazia* and *shab–e–barat*, etc., appear, in their details, to be Islamic versions of pre-Islamic beliefs and practices that are observed without any question or criticism and with rather punctiliousness.

(b) The Deobandi derive their name from the school of theology at deoband in the Saharanpur District in Uttar Pradesh and are a sub-sect of the Sunni that stands for purifying the Sunni Hanafites from a number of practices that they have retained from the little tradition. The customs and practices that, according to the followers of this school, do not have sanctions from the Quran and the Sunna are not relevant and are required to be abandoned. New elements in the performation of religion termed as bida't such as *qiam* during *milad* as well as rituals of *shab-e–barat*, sandal and tazia, etc., are denounced and condemned. While still following the tradition in its details, the Deobandi sub-sect tries to introduce logic in the interpretation of shariat and its accompanying rituals to the extent that newly introduced elements are to be purged out and traditional practices in purer form are to be reintroduced. Pirs are accepted but some criteria as to their capability, in addition to heredity, is laid down and many superstitious beliefs around their personality are not considered acceptable.

The main division within the Sunni sect, the most dominant of all Muslim sects in the city, is along the Deobandi and the Barelvi. The other two schools of theology at 'Nadva' and 'Ferengi Mahal' that appear to have come into existence under the impact of Aligarh movement and the rationalistic thoughts of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and his associates did not assume the character of sub-sects to any extent. However, their adaptive rational interpretations of financial and economic questions, veiling of women and ideas on modern education had their obvious impact on a section of the upper and middle classes of the Muslims who do not attach much importance to sectarian divisions. The section, however, is very small and is least organised.

2. The *Ahl–e–Hadith* commonly known as Wahabi are a fundamentalist sect that advocate strict following of the *shariat* as embodied in the Quran and the Hadith. They strongly denounce all intermediaries between man and God that trancend the limits of an ordinary teacher and consider the revealed book (the Quran) and the authentic sayings of the Prophet (the Hadith) as perfect sources of

guidance to a Muslim. Pirs are not accepted by them. They agree with the Sunni on the issue of *khilafat* and succession to the Prophet but no element of the 'little tradition' is consciously acceptable to them and even any amount of extra zeal in the performance of religious rites is denounced. A bida't or innovation in the sphere of religion receives strong condemnation and censorship and every attempt is made to purge religious practices of any external influence whatsoever. The sect generally follows Shafei school of jurisprudence and is more popular among Bengali speaking Muslims as also those of the South Indian origin in the city.

3. The *Ahl–e–Tasha'* or Shia sects believe in hereditary religious leadership at the highest level. All the Shia sects accept *imamat* to be within the descendents of the Prophet through his daughter Hazrat Fatima and her husband Hazrat Ali, the first imam being Hazrat Ali himself. The reigning imam is supposed to have innate qualities and has the right to nominate any male member of his patrilineal lineage as the succeeding imam. We come across three main Shia sects in our field situation namely (a) the Athna Ashari, (b) the Ismaili Shia and (c) the Imami Ismaili Shia.

(a) The *Athna Ashari Shia* sect, confined largely to upper and middle classes and mainly within the ethnic groups of higher ascribed status, believe that the 12th imam went in seclusion to reappear at suitable time to guide his followers. The Shia from the Northern and North-eastern parts of India belong to Athna A'shari sect while those from Western India belong to either of the two Ismaili sects. The sect appears to suit *nawabs* and hereditary feudal chiefs. The Awadh, the Mysore and the Murshidabad families and most of their retainers belong to the Athna Ashari Shia sect. The aristocratic families of the Muslims generally tend to enter into the fold of Shism as it is evident from the case of the Mysore family which was originally Sunni. The religious institutions and mosques built by the family are mainly Sunni while their trustees have embraced Shism.

The Ismaili sects branched from the main body of the Shia sect on the demise of the 6th Imam in Baghdad during the 8th century. The Imam earlier nominated his eldest son Ismail to succeed him but subsequently changed his decision and nominated Moosa in his place. While the majority accepted the changed nomination a group of dis-centors supporting Ismail went to form the Ismaili sect. By the 10th century the centre of the Ismailies shifted from Baghdad to Egypt which they had conquered. Here on the death of the 19th Imam the Ismailies split again into two groups, the Nizarian and the Musta'lian. In our

field situation we have both the Nizarian and the Musta'lian sects known as the Imami Ismaili Shia and the Dawoodi Bohra respectively.

(b) The Ismaili Shia commonly known as Dawoodi Bohra are the followers of Musta'li the younger brother of Nizar who stayed behind in Egypt to become the 20th Imam of the sect. The 21st Imam of the line was murdered leaving a son who was taken into concealment, while he was a minor, by a Council of his lieutenants, and very little is heard of him. The Chief of the Council known as Dai-el-Mutlaq is since then the main source of socio-religious authority for the sect. The fall of the Fatemide dynasty in Egypt led to the shifting of the Dai to Yeman where up to 24th Dai appear to have stayed. From 25th onward the centre of the sect shifted to India, establishing it in Gujarat where it has its adherents drawn almost exclusively from a homogeneous group of high Gujarati Hindu caste background, known as Bohra. The *Dai*[2] appoints *amils* (governor) at various centres, including one in Calcutta, to look after the affairs of the community and to serve as its local chief. The amil is the chief priest of the sect at the place where he is posted and exercises powers, delegated to him by the Dai, in deciding matters relating to socio-religious affairs of the group.

Difficult and complicated matters are, however, referred to the Dai for his guidance. The sect has a mosque at Pollok Street in the central Calcutta where the amil has his official residence, and around which the followers of the sect are mainly concentrated. The Dawoodi Bohra, unlike the Khoja, claim to be accepting the Shariat as the basic and compulsory code of conduct as interpreted by their sect. Dawoodi Bohra are most numerous of the two Ismailia sect and from nearly 25 individuals in 1899 their number has reached over 3000 in the city[3].

(c) Nizar the eldest son of the 19th Imam fled to Persia to become the 20th Imam of the sect known as Imami Ismaili Shia. The centre of the sect later shifted to India and the lineage of the Imam still continues, the present Agha Khan His Highness Prince Karim is the 49th Imam of the line. The followers of the sect in India are popularly known as Khoja.

Of a community of a little over 30,000 in India, mainly concen-

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2. The present Dai-el-Mutlaq Syedna Mohammadbhai Saheb Burhanuddin is the 52nd Dai who succeeded his father Syedna Taher Saifuddin.

3. 'Progress of the Dawoodi Bohra community in Calcutta', in special commemoration volume published on the occasion of Jubilee visit of His Holiness Dr. Syedna Taher Saifuddin Saheb to Calcutta in 1964

trated in Gujarat, the Khoja in Calcutta number 325 individual including 35 families. They are a homogeneous ethnic group drawn from a single or related caste background of Gujarati origin. The group activities of the Khoja centre round a *jama't khana* or mosque at Metcalf street, the keeper of which is called *mukhia kamaria*. Their social life is governed by a constituted council known as 'Federal council of the Royal Highness Prince Agha Khan Shia Imami Ismaili Sect'. The local unit at Calcutta has its office bearers as President and Secretary and is affiliated to the Federal Council at Bombay from which it gets necessary guidance.

4. The Ahmadia are popularly known as Qadiani sect, after their centre at Qadian in the Gurdaspur District of the Punjab. Having its origin in a protest against the proselytising missions of Chrirtianity in India under the influence of the Britisih rule and also against 'Sir Syed's movement for westernisation and rationalism through his journal Tahzeeb-ul-Akhlaq towards the end of the 19th century, the Ahmadia movement developed later in the form of a sect. Its leader Mirza Ghulam Ahmad rallied round him a large following as long as he combined in his movement a purifying spirit of orthodoxy, a sense of dedication for the preservation of traditional virtues and a tendency towards some sort of new liberalism but he received extreme denounciation in 1899 when his remarkable success persuaded him to proclaim himself a *Mehdi* and *Mesih* probably to unite Christianity and Islam under one banner. He stuck to his proclamation of prophethood in spite of relentless attack on him and his doctrine. The small band that remained loyal to him formed the 'sect' and the leadership of the sect continues in his lineage. The centre of the sect has now shifted from Qadyan to Lahore though the former remains an important centre in India. Considered by most other Muslim sects as outside the fold of Islam[4], because of modifying their belief in *risalat*, one of the fundamentals of Islam, the Ahmadia persistently stick to their

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4. The position of the Ahmadia vis-a-vis the Islamic religion has been controversial since their leader proclaimed himself a prophet. Avoidance of intermarriage with them and of eating their sacrificed or slaughtered animals has been the usual practice among the Muslims in general, indicating their exclusion from the fold of the Society. However, a recent court judgement in Pakistan is reported to have accepted the contention of the Ahmadia that they are Muslims on the ground that exclusion of any member or group from the fold of Islam is not valid so long as the individual or the group concerned insists on its belonging to the same.

Note later developments in Pakistan where through a legislative measure the Ahmadia have been declared as a non-Muslim minority having citizenship rights in Pakistan.

claim of being Muslims, quoting their leader as considering himself a reformer and no better than 'a dust of the feet of Prophet Mohammad'.

Ahmadia are one of the smallest 'muslim' sects in the city, only slightly larger than the Imami Ismaili Shia. Their local mission was first established in 1924 and its erstwhile head Molvi Mohammad Salim claims a membership of 500 individuals including 50 families in the city.

COMPARATIVE STRENGTH IN CALCUTTA

In case of sects with comparatively smaller number of followers like the Ahmadia, the Imami Ismaili Shia and the Dawoodi Bohra each having effective sectarian organization, correct figures are available. But as regards others like the Athna Ashari Shia, the Ahl-e-Hadith and particularly the Sunni with their sub-sects of the Deobandi and the Barelvi exact figures are not available. However, if the mosques at the disposal of each sect is a correct guide to the comparative strength, the assessment can easily be made. Of an approximate total of 500 mosques in the city including Garden Reach municipal areas, mosques at the disposal of each sect was found to be as follows :

Name of sect		*No. of mosques*	
Ahmadia	...	1	(at Park Street)
Imami Ismaili Shia	...	1	(at Metcalf Street)
Dawoodi Bohra	...	1	(at Pollock Street)
Athna Ashari Shia	...	5	(3 in Metiaburj)
Ahl-e-Hadith	...	14	(11 in Metiaburj and its adjoining areas)
Sunni (a) Deobandi		40	
(b) Barelvi			(all the rest numbering around 500)

Though sectarian and ethnic boundaries do not generally coincide, except roughly in the case of the two Ismaili sects, it follows certain patterns giving the impression of region and ethnicity to be among their important determinants. Thus we notice that the concentration of the followers of the Ahl-e-Hadith sect is proportionately larger among the Bengali-speaking Muslims and also among those who have been drawn in from the Southern regions. The followers of Ahmadia sect are mainly from the Punjab. The Ismailia sects have their adherents mainly from Gujarat. Similarly the Athna Ashari Shia are mainly confined to the groups in Block I namely the Syed, Sheikh,

The writer interviewing a Punjabi Muslim

A view of Madrasah in central Calcutta

Badshah Khan in Calcutta maidan congregation

Mughal and Pathan and very rarely draw adherents from groups in the subsequent blocks.

Sunnism and that also of the Barelvi variety, is the sect of the predominantly large section of the Calcutta Muslims. The moderate reformist movement of the Deobandis has made considerable headway but often their trained hands succumb to the prevailing Barelvism and are even forced by the circumstances to adopt Barelvi practices that run counter to their principles. Quite a few *Pesh-imams* of mosques with Deobandi training were observed slowly starting to condone the Barelvi practices around them and ultimately beginning to practice it themselves. Asked to comment on the situation a leading member of the Deobandi group remarked that "the climate and the soil is in favour of Barelvism and we are not successful in putting an end to irreligious and un-Islamic practices to the extent we should have done". He estimated that over 90% of the Sunnis belong to Barelvi group. The idea of the comparative strength can be had from what another leader of the Deobandi group said "we are often challenged to come to an open discussion in public meetings but we avoid such a situation in the interest of the community". In fact, it is not logic that the Deobandi lack in, it is the numerical strength of their opponents, charged with emotionality that embarasses them.

Effective socio-political leadership, however, remains in the hands of the Deobandi, particularly through Jamiat-ul-ulema-e-Hind having a tradition of functioning as a wing of the Indian National Congress during struggle for Independence. The political wing of the Deobandi, the Jamiat provides a united leadership to Muslims in general irrespective of their sectarian affiliation largely beacause of their emphasis on common features on the one hand and their close relationship with other nationalist elements outside the community.

Inter-sect marriages are rare though *shariat* does not stand in the way. In spite of common ethnic bounds differences in sects acts as a barrier to intermarriage. All the three Shia sects strictly observe sect endogamy, so do the Ahmadia but Deobandi and Barelvi intermarry more frequently and the Ahl-e-Hadith also do so with both the Sunni sub-sects at a restricted scale while preferring their own sect for marriage.

The divide between the two Sunni sub-sects namely the Deobandi and the Barelvi does not manifest itself to the extent of restricting them to the use of their respective mosques. Even the Ahl-e-Hadith and the Shia are allowed to use their mosques though, in fact, the latter seldom do so. The mosques of the Athna Ashari Shia are also accessible to

other Muslim sects but in fact remain in the exclusive use of the Athna Ashari Shia. The mosque of the Dawoodi Bohra is approachable to other Muslims on request but the Imami Ismaili do not allow others to visit their mosque which is preferred to be called *jama't khana*. The Ahmadia feel inclined to allow other Muslims to enter into their mosque but in fact none other than the members of the sect use the same.

The usual Shia-Sunni controversy and sometimes *moqallid* and *ghair moqallid*[5] debates that characterise inter-sect relations elsewhere is not very significant in Calcutta although both Shia and Ahl-e-Hadith sects are quite considerable. Even Ahmadia pass on without much of afront and opposition from other Muslim sects. This is first of all due to the generally tolerant character of a cosmopolitan situation where convergence of people of diverse backgrounds at a limited space develops better understanding of each other. Secondly the nature of Hindu Muslim relationship that developed during the pre-Independence days and persisted subsequently resulted in greater cohesiveness in response to the situation, eliminating at least the outer manifestation of conflicts and cleavages.

The inner organization of the sects are not of a uniform pattern. The organizations of the two Ismailia Shia sects are fairly strong and elaborately constituted. The absolute leadership of the Imam (The Agha Khan) and the Dai-el-Mutlaq has helped them in maintaining their respective patterned organizations with complete sets of officials and functionaries, both at central and regional or local levels. These organizations not only deal with the ecclesiastical affairs of the members of their respective sects but also provide guidance to them in their social affairs.

The sect organization of the Athna Ashari Shia is not so well knit as those of the Ismaili sects. The presiding position in their sect organization is that of a qualified *mufti* who is called upon to interpret shariat and provide guidance when it is sought for. The mufti who resides at Metiaburj is also required to perform rituals connected with belief system of the sect. Frequent visits of scholars in Shia theology known as *mujtahid* from Lucknow and elsewhere in the country take place to deliver lectures on religion. The Shia sect

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5. As the Ahl-e-Hadith do not believe in the necessity of being *mureed* or followers of *pir* and do not consider the validity of any via-media between man and God, they are often called ghair moqallid or non-followers. Those who follow pir are called *moqallid*.

is less homogeneous in the ethnic sense but its followers are mainly confined to ethnic groups within the first block.

The Ahmadia have a well-organized sectarian organization with the Caliph at the top and the Ameer-e-jama't at regional level. A preacher-cum-priest is also attached to their local centre since its inception in 1924. The sect has a fairly elaborate system of regulating the behaviour of its members through the organization. The preacher has the responsibility of propagating the sect among all and is thoroughly trained in the profession. The central authority of the sect in India at Qadyan decides not only about his appointment but also about his transfer and retirement, etc. The membership of the sect imposes upon an individual some financial obligations which he regularly pays to Jamat fund out of which, besides meeting other expenses, the poorer and disabled members of the sect are paid at fixed sanctioned rates. All this is done by the central authority on the recommendation of the local Jamat official.

The Ahl-e-Hadith sect is organized under a formal association named Jamiat-e-Ahl-e-Hadith but not much of activities are observable around the Jamiat. At the level of the units the activities are seen around mosques with their *peshimams*. The mosque at Marquis Lane serves as a sort of centre for the sect in the city and its adjoining areas, though *fatwas* are sought for by the members of the sect at several mosques where the imam is a qualified mufti as well.

No sectarian organization of the Sunni links all their mosques, *maktabs* or religious institutions into any kind of a united or coordinating body of any significance. The organizational set up of the Deobandi is not structured in the manner we find among the smaller sects. The Jamial-e-ulema-e-Hind, a socio-political organization and the Tableeghi jamat, a purely religious missionary organization are both dominated by the followers of Deobandi school. The former with its local office at Lower Chitpur Road has such sections as *Shari Punchayat* and *Dar-ul-ifta*. The former decides cases relating to divorce, maintenance of wife and children and sometimes inheritance and succession, etc. This is done by a committee of experts in shariat presided over by a mufti. Dar-ul-ifta similarly gives expert opinion on matters involving the interpretation of shariat in specific cases when it is sought for. The decisions on cases and opinions are of recommendatory nature without much of a binding force.

The organization of the Barelvi sub-sect of the Sunni the most numerically dominant among all sects is still less elaborate. Though Hafiz Jamaluddin's mosque at Lower Chitpur Road occupies a central

position in some respects, there is no ordered or structured set up to link and coordinate mosques and religious institutions and even to possess complete information relating to these in the city. Hafiz Jamaluddin's mosque merely serves as a centre for visiting Barelvi ulemas, just as mosque at Colootola serves for the Deobandi ulemas. The former visit the city mainly during *Milad-un-Nabi* and *giarhwin sharif* and the latter in connection with the activities of Tableeghi Jamat and Jalsa-e-seerat, etc. Some formalised organizations like Tanzeem-e-Ahl-e-sunnat at Garden Reach Road come up with the object of organizing the Barelvi sub-sect but in fact they make very little headway, except in the form of attempting to oppose and resist the reform movement of the Deobandi. Each mosque of the Sunni functions as an independent administrative unit with a *motawalli* at the top and is sustained either by a trust created by its builder or in the absence of any such trust by subscriptions from the *mosallis* and other Muslims of the neighbourhood. Fees is generally charged for *fatwa* or expertise opinions by the mufti whereever available in these mosques, particularly those of the Barelvi.

Thus we notice that the Sunnism and that of the Barelvi variety is the sect of the predominantly large section of the Muslims in the city. The belief system of this sect is least critical of the prevalent social practices including those that are considered as elements of the caste system. Though the followers of the two Islamic sects are mainly drawn from Gujarat and the followers of Ahl-e-Hadith sect are disproportionately larger among the Bengali and the Dravidian speaking muslims, the sectarian divisions cross-cut regional and linguistic boundaries. Similarly in spite of disproportionate concentration of certain sects within the blocks of ethnic groups and sectarian division characterising groups of higher status, the division has a cross-cutting effect on ethnic boundaries (*see* chart showing hierarchy in Chapter 6). This has a cohering effect on the society. The organizational patterns of sects are of varied nature suited to the belief system of the respective sects. The organizations of the smaller ones are better knit while those of the larger ones lack significant centrifugal authority besides the philosophy that guides their belief system.

Thus far we have endeavoured to present a brief description of the sects and the manner in which they divide the Muslim society in our field situation. Islamic sects as we know represent dissension and divisions in the varying interpretation of shariat that constitutes the body of laws providing guidance and laying down code of conduct for the Muslims. But spiritual domain or *tariqa* is considered a necessary

complement to shariat by a quite large section of Muslims and this gives birth to *khanqahi orders* and another kind of relationship under its framework. We shall present a brief description of this kind of interrelationship in the following chapter.

SUMMARY

Islamic sects generally represent dissentions and divisions in the varying interpretation of tradition and of historical development, though the 'basic' tenets of Islam, namely, *tawheed* (unity of God), *risalat* (Prophethood of Mohammad) and *ma'd* (belief in after life) receives universal acceptance among Muslims of all sects. The sectarian divisions occur beyond the obligatory and tabood categories of shariat well within its intermediate ranges namely prescriptive, permissible and disapproved. These ranges also generally determine the adaptivity of Islam with other civilizations. Of the four main sects in Calcutta namely the *Ahl-e-Sunnat wal Jamat* (Sunni), the *Ahl-e-Hadith*, the Shia and the *Ahmadia*, the Sunni and the Shia are divided into two and three sub-sects, respectively. While all the three Shia sub-sects the *Athna Ashari*, the Ismaili (Dawoodi Bohra) and the Imami Ismaili Shia function like separate sects quite independent of each other, the two Sunni sub-sects identified as *Deobandi* and *Barelvi* and the *Ahl-e-Hadith* sect have more in common among themselves than with other sects.

The Sunni, particularly their sub-sect of Barelvi command by far the largest following while the Imami Ismaili and the Ahmadia have very small number of followers. With emphasis on hereditary *imamate* in its belief system the Athna Ashari Shia sect is generally popular among the descendents of the nawabs and the nobility and is confined to a segment of the upper strata of the society. The Dawoodi Bohra and the Imami Ismaili Shia sects are confined within ethnic groups of homogeneous character drawn mainly from high Hindu castes of Gujarat and have strong ethnic-cum-sectarian organizations. The small Ahmadia sect though draws its followers from diverse ethnic groups, has a strong and elaborate sectarian organization. The largest sect is least organised and shows the highest degree of assimilation of the little tradition and is least critical of the persisting customs and rituals.

Theoretically the sects cross cut the ethnic boundaries yet in fact division on the basis of sects remains a feature mainly of the groups in upper blocks leaving the lower ones unaffected. The groups in lower blocks remain Sunni and within the Barelvi sub-sect constituting the numerically dominant and decisive bulk of people within the Muslim Community.

5

Segments of Society : Khanqah

Belief in spiritualism as a necessary complement to *Shariat*, in the sphere of religion, leads to the emergence of experts and specialists in the spiritual domain and brings forth a new kind of interrelationship in the society. These specialists are known as pir or *murshid* and they preside over *Khanqah* where they live and work to guide their disciples called mureed. Though the necessity of such a spiritual guidance is not accepted universally, yet we notice that the most dominant sect of the Sunni agree as to its necessity. The Deobandi and the Barelvi sub-sects do so in varying degrees. Even the followers of *Shafei* school who are closer to Ahl-e-Hadith in many of their beliefs and practices accept the necessity of *iradat* or affiliation to a pir for the sake of salvation. Ahl-e-Hadith, however, reject it outright and so do all the three Shia sects and the Ahmadia. The Shia and the Ahmadia do not, however, reject spiritualism as a camplement to Shariat, rather they believe such a power to be vested in their imams and the caliph as the case may be and not in pirs of the different Khanqahi orders. The Ahl-e-Hadith believe in an individuals' capacity for the attainment of salvation through strict following of Shariat as laid down in the Quran and embodied in the Tradition.

Unlike specialists in the sphere of Shariat such as *mufti*, *qazi* and *alim*, etc., who are drawn in from all categories irrespective of their origin, the specialists in *tariqat* such as pir are only from the groups in the first block and are generally Syed and occasionally Sheikh and others. The former acquire specialisation through rigorous training and by dint of their application and endeavour while the latter receive it through heredity and delegation in addition to training from the head of the khanqah of an established *silsila*. While maktabs and madrasahs are among the institutions connected with the shariat the khanqahs are mainly centres related to spiritual training and are the abode of the pir. Astanas or dargahs where the mortal remains of the sacred

people lie in eternal rest and also places of importance as pilgrimage centres for the devotees.

KHANQAHS IN CALCUTTA

A rapid survey of 20 sacred places in the city showed that 13 of them are astanas or dargahs of the nature of shrine built at the *mazars* or tombs where the mortal remains of a saint or pir lie buried. The rest are khanqahs where one silsila[1] or another continues having a living successor or pir as its head. Of these four belong to Qadria[2] silsila and one each to *Neqshbandia Waresia* and *Chishtia–Nizamia silsilas*. The khanqahs of such silsilas as *Shattaria, Tabaqatia* (Madaria), *Malang, Refaia* or *Gurzmar, Jalalia* and *Sohagia,* etc. as mentioned by Crooke (Vol. 3. 1896) and Risley (1892) could not immediately be found. The presence of a few individuals representing some of those is, however, not altogether ruled out. A number of pirs representing their silsilas pay frequent visits to the city to enable their devotees to meet them. A few well established khanqahs are situated outside the city in the surrounding districts of Hooghly and 24-Parganas which attract devotees from Calcutta. The annual urs or death anniversaries of these pirs attract such a large number of devotees from Calcutta that special trains are required to be run from the city to these places.

It will be out of place here to discuss as to how the spiritual leadership branched into silsilas, the distinguishing features and organizational pattern of each and methods of imparting training to the successors and guidance to the devotees. We shall mainly confine ourselves to the description of interrelationships around the khanqah and its significance in the total organization of the Muslim society.

Ethnically or genealogically all the Calcutta pirs are Syeds. At Phurphura Sharif in Hooghly, however, the chief of the Khanqah is Sheikh (Siddiqui). Generally the pir is not conceived of as belonging to any other ethnic category than the Syed and the Sheikh although in theory the power can be deligated to any Muslim, worthy for the position, irrespective of his ethnic origin. It is, however, difficult to find a pir coming of any other ethnic group than the Syed and the Sheikh to a limited extent.

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1. Each silsila is distinguished from the other by the name of its founder saint and often by its special rituals. A silsila means chain or connect us genealogical or affiliated.

2. Of the four Qadria Khanqahs two are in Taltalla area and one each at Mofidul Islam Lane and Kidderpur (for a list of the astanas and Khanqahs *see* Appendix II).

At lower levels among groups with hereditary occupational backgrounds of mendicants known as Shah[3] or Faqir and people believed to be associated with 'charms' or certain 'super natural' powers like Dafali are come across. At these levels the Shah or the Dafali have certain functions analogous to the pir but they too owe allegience to certain Khanqahi order and claim to derive their power from these orders. The faqir have begging as their traditional occupation while acceptance of charity is strictly forbidden for the Syed. The pir accept offerings and generally, when sufficient trusts do not exist to run the khanqah, the expenses of the khanqah are met out of these *nazranas* or offerings. Faqir generally work as subordinate staff under the motawalli or trustee of the astanas, dargahs and khanqahs. The Dafali, believed to be possessing the power to deal effectively with certain malignant spirit, besides having a traditional occupation of making drums, generally have the scope of functioning at the level of the groups having traditional occupational background. The relationship of the Faqir and the Dafali with their clients is quite different from the relationship between the pir and his mureed. The function of the former relates to some common superstitions while of the latter in a wider sense operate within the broader framework of the Islamic Great Tradition.

In a general sense a twofold division of the society is visible around the Khanqah namely the pir on the one hand and the mureed or the clients on the other. The discipline of the Khanqah demands suspension of the application of logic and reasoning in matters of religion and generally cultivates a habit of complete surrender to the pir on the part of the mureed. Outwardly the surrender is not induced but is merely voluntary, and generally the atmosphere is built up in which each mureed tries to compete with the other in greater surrender of himself to the pir. On account of belief in 'supernatural' power of hereditary character in the pir, even elderly professors were observed kissing the hands of the young-children of a pirs' family in a sort or reverence. Far from demonstrating power and authority the pir and the entire environment of his Khanqah is charged with courtesy and politeness of extreme nature with dignity and distance.

In spite of competition to gain favour of the pir the interrelationship between mureeds do not demonstrate conflict or rivalry, at least none of it comes on the surface, it rather develops in a kind of closer 'brotherhood'. The mureeds of a common pir are called 'pir-bhai' with

3. It is of interest to find out how they derived their surname *Shah* which they generally use. It is possible that it is an Islamised form of Shahaja, a 'heredity' order of lower mendicants aiming at syncretism at popular levels.

some duties and obligations towards each other. Some of the problems of the rich and the poor, the employer and the unemployed and of marriage and other similar problems find solution on account of the interrelationships within the Khanqah, under the leadership of the pir.

The spiritual power of the pir is believed to be continuing even after his death. His mazar is, therefore, not only a place of reverence but also a fountain head of spiritual and temporal virtues. The mazars are often called astanas (meaning the doorsteps of the shrine built on it) which are frequented by devotees to implore the blessings of a happier life and a peaceful after life. The belief or superstition about the astanas and about certain silsilas are shared by both Hindus and Muslims. Over 60 per cent of the visitors to the Dargah of Moula Ali Shah were reported to be Hindus both Bengali and non-Bengali and nazranas received from them were quite considerable. Visits to Khanqahs by Hindus are not uncommon. Several noted political leaders including those in power implore the blessings of the pir on the eve of elections or on similar occasions. The interrelationship between the Hindus and the Khanqahs, though at times fairly stable, do not, however, develop into the kind of patron-client relationship between the pir and his mureed.

Thus we notice that the Muslim Society in Calcutta, in so far as the operation of tariqat is concerned, gets polarised into two clearly defined groups of pir and mureed. It is true that the actual number of people who obtain *iradat* and become clients is quite limited, yet many more aspire for such clientship and consider it an important prerequisite for salvation and a happier after life. This belief gets sustenance from their sectarian affiliation identified as Barelvi sub-sect, and finds expression in their participation in urs, fateha, sandal and several rituals of the kind that are related to the domain of spiritualism. We also notice that the pir belongs to the ethnic group known as Syed, held in highest esteem and enjoying highest social status, and rarely to other groups in block I. They are seldom drawn on other blocks. The mureeds of a particular order who are pir-bhai or brothers of the same order are from all blocks cutting across all ethnic affiliations and frequently the sub-sectarian affiliations of the Deobandi and the Barelvi within the framework of the Sunni sect, the most numerically dominant in Calcutta. This sometimes includes the Shafei whose belief syitem and rituals are closer to Ahl-e-Hadith.

In spite of the fact that affiliation to khanqah develops a relationship particularly among the mureed that cuts across ethnic boundaries,

there is a tendency for certain ethnic groups to revere certain silsila. Thus the Gujarati Meman revere Qaderia order, the Meo, Ghosi and Sheikhji of North Calcutta are generally affiliated to the Naqshbandia. Chishtia order is popular among the Sunni Bohra. Where the history of conversion of an ethnic group to Islamis related to certain saints the saint and his order becomes an object of special reverence for the group. This is evident among the Meman, the Qaum-e-Punjabian and the Sunni Bohra who relate their entry into Islam through the efforts of these saints. The special rituals performed by the Besati, Qalander, Dhobi, Dafali, Mirshikar and Lal Begi with regard to Bu Ali Shah, Ghazi Baba, Khawja Hasan Basri and Lal Beg respectively also point to the direction. These saints appear to occupy in an analogous way the position of certain *rishis* in relation to the gotra or castes during their pre-Islamic past.

If we view the hereditary character of the sacred as an element of the Indian social organization as compared to the Quranic injunction of 'individual righteousness as the sole criterion of honourability' (5. XLIX : 13 : 1407) and sacredness, the hereditary leadership of the khanqah would appear a deviation from the injunction and as adaptive of the prevailing climate in the Indian society or at least very much suited to the Indian social environment. True, righteousness is stated to be a qualification of a pir but his hereditary character remains an essential feature. Further in spite of the relationship in the khanqah cutting across ethnic boundaries we notice clusters of particular ethnic groups around specific khanqahs and certain saints being the object of special reverence to particular ethnic groups. This also reflects the same adaptive trend. Viewed from the eyes of the fundamentalist sect it is very much against the spirit and the teaching of Islam, particularly the rituals centering round mazars like sandal and certain features of urs and fateha. These definitely represent the departure from abstract nature of the object of worship to the concrete nature of the object of reverence and demonstrates a great measure of adaptivity in favour of the prevailing social climate in India.

SUMMARY

Spiritualism (tariqat) though distinct from the body of laws (shariat) is considered a necessary complement to it in the sphere of religion, at least for the most dominant sect in the numerical sense namely the Sunni. Around khanqah, the main institution of tariqat, a well defined twofold division, pir and mureed, is clearly visible under the leadership of the former. The two have the features of patron-client relationship.

The khanqahs belong to the hereditary silsilas of the pir and continue under the leadership of the descendents of the founder pir. Seven such khanqahs in the city belong to four silsilas all of which are confined within the ethnic category known as Syed who enjoy highest ascribed status, though in theory non-Syeds can also be pir and *khilafat* i.e., power to recruit mureed and to guide them, can also be deligated to any Muslim worthy for the assignment irrespective of his birth. In actuality the organization of the khanqah in the city demonstrates a birth determined higher status of the pir in relation to the rest of the society. Viewed in the light of individual righteousness as the sole criterion of honorability as laid down in the Quran this hereditary character of the sacred would appear very much as adaptive of the social environment.

6

Interrelationship of Social Groups within the Society

In the previous chapter we observed the Muslim Society in Calcutta to be composed of a number of groups consisting of nationals[1] and resident aliens. The two are immediately distinguishable not only in physical appearance, language, mode of dress and dietary habits, etc., but also in the mode of interaction with the community at large and certain duties and obligations in regard to fellow nationals as a result of consciousness of sharing common destiny on account of a common nationality. The absence of such an obligation on the part of the aliens explains their withdrawal from common associations of socio-political nature and also from active participation in welfare activities.

The nationals, as we saw, are again composed of a number of ethnic groups drawn from different regions in the country. Of the groups that were observed in the city, 7 are from north-western, 12 from western, 8 from southern and 32 from northern regions, including the Ganges delta. The groups as we observed, are not of uniform size. The largest number of groups as also the decisive bulk of the people in the city are from the northern region including the delta.

Cutting across all these national, regional and ethnic categories we noticed that the entire Muslim population of the city is segmented on the basis of the sects, the largest of which is Sunnism of the Barelvi school which we have preferred to call a sub-sect. This is followed by Sunnism of Deobandi School, Ahl-e-Hadith, Athna Ashari Shia and the Ismaili Shia, commonly known as Dawoodi Bohra. The remaining two sects of Imami Ismaili Shia and Ahmadia known as

1. The term national has been used here to include the people belonging to the Indian subcontinent irrespective of their citizenship in the political sense of the term while aliens are those who are from outside the subcontinent and are culturally related to the area of their origin.

Qadiani have very small number of following in the city, each not exceeding 50 families among their adherants.

In the present chapter we propose to discuss the nature of the ethnic groups, their occupational specialisations, their inner organizations and their interrelationship, both commensal and hierarchical, as observed on the basis of an extensive survey in the city.

THE NATURE OF THE GROUPS

The ethnic groups based on descent, real or supposed, and sometimes on hereditary occupation and sect, drawn in from a wide area within the country are organizational units of great significance within the Muslim Society in the city of Calcutta.

As we have noticed a large number of ethnic groups are drawn from the northern region including the Gangetic delta to which the bulk of the Muslim population in the city owe their origin. The numerical dominance of the Hindustani speaking people has resulted in the emergence of a Hindustani dialect referred to as 'Gulabi Urdu'. Urdu again remains not only the medium of instruction in the primary centres of religious learning such as the maktabs and the madrasahs, centering mostly around the mosque, but also the language of religious sermons and most of the ceremonies like *milad* and *jalsa-e-seerat*, etc., as also the language of inter-ethnic communication.

Each of the groups bears a name indicating either its descent or descent-cum-traditional occupation. The Syed and the Sheikh are entirely of the nature of descent groups, so are the Mughals and the Pathans, who also have a background of ruling and fighting. The Bohra, the Khoja and the Meman and the Qaum-e-Punjabian groups claim to have entered into the fold of Islam from either a Brahmin or a Kshatriya caste backgrounds and are at present trading communities. Dawoodi Bohra (Ismaili Shia) and the Khoja (Imami Ismaili Shia) are sectarian-cum-ethnic groups. Many of their original caste names are retained. A large number of groups wedded to traditional occupation are either known by names denoting their occupation or by a new name subsequently adopted in a bid to claim greater respectability and higher status than was normally granted to them. The weavers, the butchers, the green grocers, the distillers, the cotton carders, the churihars and the chidimars prefer to be called by their newly assumed names such as Ansari, Qureshi, Raie, Iraqi, Mansuri and both the last mentioned by Siddiqui respectively though remaining on the one hand quite distinct as separate groups among themselves and from Sheikh Siddiqui on the other. The barbers and the washer-

men have also adopted surnames in tune with others but they seldom use them while the Besati, the Dafali[2] and the Kharadi as also the Bengali speaking Nikari, Darzi and Patwa have not adopted any, so is the case of the Meo and the Ghosi. Adoption of surname to give respectability to themselves, is largely confined to some of the groups drawn from the Hindustani speaking area of the northern region. It is absent among the groups from the western, north-western and the southern regions as also among the Bengali speaking groups from the Delta area of the northern region.

Several ethnic groups are broad based and have been drawn in from over a wide area transcending the boundaries of the regions, while others are strictly regional in character and have been drawn from specific regions. Thus the Syed and the Sheikh are from most regions so is the case of the Mughal and the Pathan. The Awan and Kakazai are exclusively north-western and are from North West Forntier Province. The Nilgar groups of Shekhawati and Madi as also other occupational groups of Manihar, Sonar and Teli, etc., are from Rajasthan in the western region. The same is true of the South Indian groups of Mopla, Mosalliyar and Keyi who are exclusively from the Malayali speaking area and of Maraykar, Rowther and Labbai who are drawn from the Tamil speaking areas of the same region. Many more examples, such as those of the Meo and the Ghosi etc., can be given to show that these are drawn from specific regions within the country, having either a caste or even perhaps a tribal background.

There is a good deal of variation in the internal structure of the groups as also the rules of selecting the mate from within the group, indicating differential marriage distance although Islam lays down specific rules about the permissible range[3]. Thus the exogamous gotra

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2. Dafali elsewhere have, however, adopted *Hashemi* as their surname that is sought to indicate their Arab ancestry.

3. The Quran specifies the prohibited range as follows and states "And marry not women whom your father married, except what is past : It was shameful and odious, and abonimable custom indeed. Prohibited to you (for marriage) are : Your mothers, daughters, sisters ; fathers sisters, mother's sisters ; brother's daughters ; sister's daughters ; foster mothers (who gave you suck), foster sisters, your wife's mother, your step-daughters under your guardianship, born of your wives to whom ye have gone in, no prohibition if ye have not gone in ; those who have been wives of your sons proceeding from your loins, and two sisters in wedlock at one and the same time, except for what is past ; for God is oft-forgiving, most merciful. Also (Prohibited are) women already married.....Except for these all others are lawful provided ye seek them in marriage" (The Quran S. IV : Section 4 : 23-24 *Translated by* A. Yusuf ali).

system of the Hindu caste is observed among the Rajasthani groups of Shekhawati, Madi, Manihar, Sonar, Lohar, etc., and the Meo from Gurgaon as well as Ghosi from Uttar Pradesh. The gotras or clans among all these groups are named[4] and there are elaborate rules for avoiding father's gotra as also several generations within the mother's gotra. Among several other groups though elaborate gotra system is not present yet the idea of consanguinity at the level of lineages is operative at least in so far as intermarriage is concerned. Thus quite a few groups such as the Dhobi and the Mansoori from north Bihar avoid marriages within the patrilineage upto a few generations and their first cousins at any rate. The section that has been exposed to outside influence is noted for changing its practices in this regard and the marriage distance among them is being reduced. Among most others, gotras do not exist or exist only to provide surnames as in the case of Kshatriya Muslims drawn either from Delhi and Uttar Pradesh as well as from Gujarat and also in the case of tailors of Metiaburj.

The ethnic groups are variously called *qaum*, *jama't*, *jat* or *zat* or *beradari*. Although these terms have various meanings in different spheres yet they are used to denote ethnic groups based on descent or descent-cum-occupation or descent-cum-sect. A variety of terms to denote the same object indicates only the regional or linguistic differences and also differences in terminologies used at different levels within the same regional and linguistic groups. In ordinary sense *qaum* has a wider connotation, meaning in political sense a nation but in the northern and north-western parts of India both Hindus and Muslims have been using the term to denote caste groups, such as *qaum kayastha, qaum Rajput, qaum Pathan,* etc. The Muslims of Kshatriya origin in the city call themselves *qaum-e-Punjabian*. Similarly jama't in a socio-political sense means a party or groups either of voluntary or involuntary nature but Muslims from western India use the term to mean either ethnic or sectarian-cum-ethnic groups such as Kachchi Meman, Halai Meman, Bohra groups and Ismaili Khoja, etc.

Jat or *zat* and *beradari* are the terms current among the people from northern India particularly from the Gangetic valley. Generally, though not always used among the occupational and non-occupational groups respectively. Among the occupational categories also the sections that have attained a higher degree of culture and greater integration with the Muslim Society in terms of their exposition to

4. Such gotras as *Bagarwale, Qureshi, Badi, Lodhi, Seekar* and *Jaipuri* were identified among the *Madi* (black skirt) while the *Shekhawati* (red skirt) consisted of *Lodhi, Solanki, Ghauri. Chouhan* and *Arabi* gotras. For gotra or clans among the Ghosi and the Meo please *see* F. N. at p. 51

Islamic Great Tradition, demonstrate a tendency towards greater preference for the term *beradari* than *jat* to denote their ethnic group. Often zat beradar is used as simultaneous synonyms to denote fellow caste members.

OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALISATION

Ethnic groups, as we have seen, are of the nature of patrilineally reckoned descent groups with or without occupational background. The case of a section of Malayali speaking Moplas from north Malabar is slightly different as they have been drawn in from a 'matrilineal' background, though in matters of residence and pattern of inheritance their traditional norms are not operative in the city. They, however, continue to remain matronymic as against the rest of the Muslim groups who are all patronymic whether this finds adequate expression in their names or not. The residential pattern of the 'matrilineal' Mopla is neolocal.

A large number of groups are identified on the basis of their *abaipesha* or traditional occupation and a belief in common origin or descent. Among the *peshawar* or occupational groups even the sections who have abandoned the abaipesha continue to remain members of the group and their former background continues to serve as a binding force and a factor for ethnic identity.

There is no idea among the members of these groups as to how their ancestors got involved in the occupations they are identified with, but there is a general belief among the groups about some kind of virtue attached to them though some members from each group have abandoned their traditional occupation to adopt new ones. In several cases the entire group in the city has abandoned its traditional occupation though members of the same group elsewhere continue to pursue the same. Thus the most numerically dominant Momin (Ansari) no longer pursue the occupation of weaving nor the affluent Iraqi any longer do the distillation work in the city. The abandoning of traditional occupation does not, however, disaffiliate the members from the main body of their ethnic groups with whom they continue to be identified for the purpose of marriage and membership of political organization.

It may be noted that occupational specialization is not inherent to the concept of society in Islam. No limitation is imposed on any individual or a group of any kind to confine itself to the particular calling and least of all, are occupations supposed to be hereditary. However, if a group sticks to a particular occupation and makes it a

hereditary one it does not violate any of the canons of shariat so long there is no superimposed compulsion about the same. It must however, be admitted that ethnicity is not necessarily supposed to have a positive correlation with occupational specialization in the concept of society in Islam.

Incidentally, however quite a number of prophets and saints referred to in Islamic scriptures are believed to have pursued one occupation or another for their livelihood. Muslim groups pursuing identical occupations tend to adopt the name of the saint, associated with their respective occupations as their surname and often start tracing their descent from them. These surnames serve as important tools to raise their status in social mobility movements. The surnames of most of the groups with occupational background adopted in recent years give indication to this effect.

In Calcutta, as probably elsewhere in the country, however, the Muslim Society is not organised in a manner where all these groups are in functional relationship with each other nor even there is a limited area within the city where such a functional interdependence of exclusive nature is come across. In other words, these groups seen in the background of their traditional occupation, while forming part of the Muslim Community are functionally linked with a larger society including the Hindus, though on a model different from the jajmani system in the villages where they are known to be operating with Hindu jatis (Mandelbaum : 70 : 547)

A few occupations like tailoring and to a lesser extent book binding provide the example of the process involved in the traditionalization of occupation in the context of our social situation. The case of Bengali speaking tailors shows that when a group of people with identical background enters into a trade and remains in it for generations it tends to constitute an endogamous group. The book-binders too have attained a degree of cohesiveness as an occupational group though they are not as exclusively endogamous as the tailors.

In a competitive situation of the urban economy there has been some amount of interpenetration in each other s occupational fields at least in the case of several groups. Thus we notice several non-Qureshis and non-Chicks running meat stalls and even employed in the trade a section of the Raie (green grocers) beating drums in the band parties, non-Raies selling vegetables and fruits and non-Hajjams taking up the occupation of barbers in the hair-cutting saloons. A few occupations like cotton-carding and that of washerman excepting the dry cleaning

work) however remain exclusively within the respective ethnic groups. Also it is hard to find people in sweeping occupation without having it as traditional occupation. The interpenetration in the occupational spheres, wherever has occurred, has only been marginal and has been limited to clean occupational groups. Whatever be the extent of interpenetration of groups in each others' occupations it does not disturb the ethnic homogeneity based on descent and the endogamous character of the group as a whole.

In the Hindu society we observe several castes having identical traditional occupation with Muslim occupational groups, as for example there are castes of weavers, barbers, washermen, green grocers, drum beaters, wood workers, bird catchers, distillers and sweepers, etc., in the Hindu society as in the Muslim society.

Services rendered by these occupational groups, Hindus or Muslims, are not restricted to their respective societies. In case of a few Muslim groups, however, a part of the function is restricted to the Muslims such as some barbers with specialised knowledge do circumcission, the faqir or mendicants often serve the mazars or astanas and the butchers supply beef. The traditional occupations of a few Muslim groups are obviously more oriented towards rendering service to the Hindu society rather than to the Muslim, if we suppose Muslim society to be governed by Islamic traditions in a rather strict sense of the term. Thus the drum-making or drum-beating aspect of the Dafali's occupation or modelling or painting aspect of a Patwa's occupation has no function in the Muslim society. The Iraqis' traditional occupation of distilling intoxicants is un-Islamic as intoxication is a taboo in Islam.

That Muslim occupational groups are generally not oriented towards rendering services to Muslim society alone is evident from the division of a single group of butchers into two separate endogamous groups dealing in beef and mutton respectively. The abhorance of beef by the Hindus on account of the sacredness of the cow and avoidance of all social intercourse with those who deal with it, led to a fission within the Muslim butchers and separation of group called Chick who deal with mutton only without having to do anything with dealing in beef, to enable the Hindus to buy mutton from them. This, at least, is believed by the Chicks of Calcutta as a reason for their separate identity as distinct from the Qureshi.

All occupations are not accorded with equal status, and contrary to Islamic teachings some of the accupations are considered lower than others. A weaver or a churihar generally speaks of inferiority involved in the occupation of a green grocer and of a butcher. The trading

communities consider their occupation superior to those of weavers, churihars, butchers and green grocers. The job of a sweeper is considered as lowliest.

Each group either occupational or non-occupational has its own name and adoptian of a new name, particularly among the occupatianal groups, as we have seen, has been on group level rather than on individual level. Mobility movements are thus group movements and not individual ones on any appreciable scale. Such cases, though rare, are, however, not entirely absent when individuals belonging to lower status groups, taking advantage of the amorphous situation have adopted the surnames of higher ones as that of the Syed. This, however, leads to gossips and raising of eye-brows among the known circles and is considered a very degrading act. The couplet[5] often quoted suggesting the practice of widespread forging of genealogies has, therefore, a very limited validity even in a cosmopolitan situation.

ENDOGAMY AND EXOGAMY

The groups thus have all the characteristics of closed groups where the membership is determined by birth and the group-bounderies are maintained through endogamy. Violation of the rules of endogamy is a serious matter in most groups and result in from ostracism to a downward descend in the social scale, depending upon the position of the group concerned in the total situation as well as the strength of the group organization.

In spite of preference to one's own ethnic group the incidence of marriage between the Syed and the Sheikh occur to a cansiderable extent and both these groups were found to be marrying among the Mughal and the Pathan. Intermarriage between these four categories is a little more frequent among smaller sects like the Shia and the Ahmadia (*see* Table 3). The tendency is, however, to grant the Syeds the privilege of hypergamy. Normally all these four groups prefer to marry within a limited range of relatives or known people from amongst their respective groups called *Kufv*[6].

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5. Pesh azin Qassab budam badazin gashtam Sheikh ; Imsal Ghalla chun arzan shawad Syed mishawam (tr. I was first a butcher than I became Sheikh, this year when the food grains become cheaper, I shall become a Syed.)

6. In ordinary sense as it is applicable among the four groups of Syed, Sheikh, Moghal and Pathan a section of the ethnic group inhabiting within, or having territorial affiliations to, a known area within which entire range of Kinship is generally confined or intermarriages may take place, is understood as Kufv. Among most other groups, including those with traditional occupation, all coreligionists within the ethnic category constitute their respective kufv.

Table 3 : Showing the frequency of intermarriage synchronically between the four groups of Syed, Sheikh, Mughal and Pathan among the Shia of Metiaburj based on random sample of 48 families.

Husband	Name of the Group: Wife					Total
	Syed	Sheikh	Mughal	Pathan	Others	
Syed	10	—	3	6	—	19
Sheikh	2	4	—	5	—	11
Mughal	5	1	2	4	—	12
Pathan	2	—	—	3	1	6
Total	19	5	5	18	1	48

Najabat *i.e.*, purity of descent is a matter of pride and one both of whose parents come from the same ethnic group and belong to the same kufv, particularly among the Syed and the Sheikh is called *najeeb-ul-tarafain*. Those born of hypergamous unions of Syed and Sheikh men with women of occupational groups are know as *moulazada*. On account of their inferior status the moulazadas do not get access to the groups of their father freely. They form a separate group and have to marry within their own group. The jealous regard for the maintenance of the purity of descent among the occupational groups does not allow them to be easily acceptable for marriage relationship within their mother's groups. However, much of the inferiority attached to them is made good in case of material advancement in the context of economic backgrounds and poverty of other groups. All the social stigmas attached to them, however do not easily go.

Among both the Qaum-e-Punjabian groups of Delhi and Anwla as well as the Malik, the Dawoodi Bohra, the Ismaili Khoja and both the Halai and Kachchi Memans, the rules of endogamy are strictly observed. Among both the Ismaili groups namely Dawoodi Bohra and Imami Ismaili Shia where strong group organizations exist, violation of the rules of endogamy is taken serious note of, resulting in the expulsion of the offender from the group. Others have different ways

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Defining the concept Shah Abdush Shakoor Farooqi Mojadidi Naqshbandi (in Fatwa-e-Hindiya, Ilm-ul-Fiqah Vol. VI p. 8-9) says that any two persons sharing the following six attributes are Kufv in relation to each other. These are (i) nasab (common origin), (ii) Islam, (iii) freedom, (iv) wealth or economic status, (v) honesty and (vi) occupation. Explaining the equality in *nasab* he says that it is reliable only for the Arabs. Among the Arabs a Qureshi is equal to Qureshi. The non-Qureshis are each other's kufv. All non-Arabs, according to him in spite of differences in their nasab are kufv in relation to each other. A non-Arab, he says, cannot be an Arab's kufv.

of dealing with the situation and in all cases those of mixed ethnic background loose considerable degree of status.

The rules of endogamy are generally more strictly imposed among the occupational groups and in particular among those groups that have strong group organizations of panchayats. Panchayats among such groups as Qureshi, Raie, Mansuri, Chick, Dafali, Ghosi, Hajjam and Qalander as well as Shekhawati, Madi, Manihar, Sonar, Lohar, Dhobi, Teli and Besati groups from Rajasthan exist in some form or other and in several cases are fairly strong. Violation of the rules of endogamy is strictly dealt with but among a few others like the Momin, the Iraqi and the Besati (from northern region) where the group organization is in the process of breaking down the traditional norm in regard to endogamy is generally adhered to in a more or less voluntary manner.

Table 4 : Showing extent of Endogamy/Exogamy among four ethnic groups.

Groups	Husband	Wife		Total
		Own group	Outside the group	
Qaum-e-Punjabian (Delhi)	100	98	2	100
Ansari	100	100	—	100
Qureshi	100	97	3	100
Lal Begi	48	46 (96%)	2 (4%)	48

In an urban situation where the development of class pattern has taken place in a way that the boundaries of caste and class do not coincide, though the occupational groups of inferior social status are in a comparatively favourable position, the incidence of hypogamy is not altogether absent, as it is expected to. Yet the pattern of exogamy is by and large hypergamous. Groups with higher ascribed social status are granted the privileges of hypergamy.

The Syed claim to take utmost care not to allow their daughters to be married with non-Syeds. The same is true of the Sheikhs as also of the Mughals and the Pathans who do not allow their female to be married to a group believed to be having lower social status. The first marriage of a Syed male is usually within the group. The Pakhtoon and Peshawari groups while accepting females from other groups, do not allow their daughters to marry outside their respective groups. The Meo and the Sheikhjee who are dairy farmers acquire bride from Bengali speaking peasants mostly from the southern parts of 24-Parganas at a short distance from the city. This matrimonial relationship is not on the basis of reciprocity for they do not allow their girls to be wed outside their groups.

A few groups like the Kachchi Meman from the western region and the Besati from the northern region are noted for the violation of the rules of endogamy in considerably larger proportion (Kachchi 70% and Besati 50% approximately) yet the section among them that is 'pure' enjoys greater prestige than the section that has emerged as a result of marriage outside the group. The two emerging groups are separately endogamous, the 'pure' ones more particular about it than the other. The numerically dominant bisser section of the Kachchi Meman in spite of exerting pressure on the jama't is yet to be granted fuller rights and equal status it demands.

The purity or otherwise of descent in different groups is expressed differently at different levels. Among the groups in the first block, specially the Syed and the Sheikh, those maintaining the purity of descent, or are najeeb-ut-tarafain, are distinguished from the rest. Those of mixed character with their parents belonging to different groups within the block are not very much segregated and continue to belong to their father's group. They maintain kinship ties within the block. Another category consisting of the progeny of the members of the block with women of occupational groups known as moulazada has inferior status. Members of this group do not find access to the groups of their father on equal terms and constitute a separate endogamous group. The Meman groups as we have seen have *sudh* sections to be distinguished from bisser. Among most of the groups with occupational background the *asli* or pure are distinguished from birrahe or impure. Among a few other groups like the Dhobi and the Dafali mere expiation throngh community feeding or milad or both makes the members, violating the rules of endogamy, one with the general body of the groups concerned.

Preservation of endogamous character or '*matching the bones*', as it is generally spoken of, is a constant anxiety among all groups. Belief in purity of descent presupposes impurity of its violation or of its being of polluting nature. The emergence of subgroups of inferior social status within a number of groups, expulsion or ostracism for the violation of the rules of endogamy among a few and the performance of expiatory rites for re-entry into the group amply demonstrates the behaviour of the groups in regard to the violation of the rules of endogamy.

The rationale for adherence to endogamy is similarly varied at various levels. Among groups in the first block namely Syed, Sheikh, Mughal and Pathan it finds shelter into the pre-Islamic or more accurately Arab concept of kufv. Among groups drawn from high

Hindu castes mere compliance of customary practices is stated as to its justification and among those wedded to traditional occupations or having merely backgrounds of the same the necessity arising out occupational training is generally given the reason for the continued practice of endogamy. The informed and sophisticated circles within all these blocks also mention the permissive character of the Quranic verse[7] which is interpreted to mean that groups are intended to preserve their boundaries for the purpose of distinction between themselves and this distinction is stated to be merely for the sake of recognition. But even these informed and 'sophisticated' circles are unable to carry their arguments in rationalising endogamy much further on the basis of Islam, once instances of practices to the contrary by early Muslims and during the lifetime of the Prophet are given and spirit of Islamic egalitarianism is explained. They agree to the suggestion that the whole basis of endogamy rather the very structure of groups themselves is customary as well as environmental. Among yet another 'modernised' and conscious circle the incompatibility of group endogamy and beradari soliderity with Islamic concept of society is being hotly debated and the former is being outrightly condemned[8]. These criticisms of 'castism' among Muslims may have some impact on psychological orientation of the community in being less opposed to interethnic marriages but its effect in terms of practice is yet to be felt in any significant manner.

While actual or potential kins come, in most cases, almost exclusively from one's own ethnic group the actual range of kinship of a group member is limited to a smaller circle within the group. Factors responsible for the formation of such marriage subgroups were observed to include a territorial background of a village or even of a larger unit, class and economic status and often coincidence in a particular locality in the city or the experience of such a coresidence in the past.

A section of the members of most of the groups are in living contact with the areas of their origin, while another has settled down in the city permanently loosing all direct contact with the areas its members came from. South Indian groups are, generally, in more intimate relationship with the areas of their origin than others. Excepting a few

7. The Quran : 5 XLIX : 1407 Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

8. The Al Jamiat daily is among the journals that has recently (1971) published a number of articles condemning the practice of restricting marriage within beradari. This criticism of beradari solidarity and beradari endogamy though not based on the situation obtaining in Calcutta alone but equally holds good to the city as well.

Malayali families[9] most other South Indian Muslim groups remain in Calcutta detatched from families. Rajasthani groups in contrast to South Indian groups, in spite of their comparative economic backwardness, live with their families in far greater proportion than the latter. The group or a section thereof that remains attached to the area of its origin normally prefers to marry within the area it comes from. This is true of all groups irrespective of the region they hail from. The sections of the groups that have more stable base in the city prefer to marry within the city itself and of course within the respective sections. Comparative attachment of a group to the area of its origin would tentatively suggest, in the same proportion, its detachment from the social environment of its habitat. However, in spite of this comparative detachment from the social environment of the city, mere presence of these sections on the scene has the effect of reinforcing many of the group norms on the group as a whole, including the section with its base in the city. The latter section in turn may be having its impact on the former to be carried back to the areas that constitute its base, the assessment of which will involve an interesting and useful study. Here we have been mainly concerned with the nature of group endogamy which we find to be generally present.

It may be worth mentioning that for a very insignificant section of the Muslim population in the city, considerations of ethnic and regional backgrounds, though not of class status, in establishing marriage relationship, may not be as important as it is for others comprising of the vast bulk of Muslims in the city. This small section may be identified among the older inhabitants. A very long association with the city has tended to blur their regional and ethnic identities though not oblitrating them completely. Such a section, however, does not form a cohesive group as compared to other groups and is not of significance in the numerical sense.

GROUP COUNCILS

Some sort of organization of the nature of panchayat or group council is a normal prerequisite for ethnic groups within the pale of Hindu social organization. In Calcutta we come across such panchayat organizations among many Muslim ethnic groups as well. The structure and strength of these panchayats vary from group to group

9. Of an estimated population of 5000 individuals in Calcutta there are only 50 Malayali Muslim families in the city.

according to the nature of occupation pursued and from one level to another.

There is striking absence of any tradition of panchayat among the groups in the first block namely the Syed, Sheikh, Mughal and Pathan or Pakhtoon as also the Malik in the second block. The Syed and Sheikh have no history of being tied to any traditional occupation at all. This is comparable to the virtual absence of caste association among the upper *varna* strata among the Hindus. The Mughal and the Pathan have a ruling and fighting background which remains only in the memory in the same way as the traditional position of the Syed and the Sheikh with regard to land-owning and literary persuits is a matter of the past. The hereditary leadership of mystic or Khanqahi orders known as *sajjada nashini* continues to remain confined within the Syed and sometimes the Sheikh, though all Syeds and Sheikhs are not *sajjada nashin*. The position of the Malik is obscure, but they too are not tied to any traditional occupation. None of these ethnic groups are observed having their group panchayats in any form. The members of these groups are generally widely dispersed and seldom demonstrate a tendency of developing organizations of the nature of caste councils. In the absence of the agencies of social control within their respective groups they generally maintain themselves through status consciousness and collective sentiments. The higher status they claim and generally accorded to them, particularly to Syed and the Sheikh have ascriptive aspects and to the Mughal and Pathan for their achievements in the past, is however not cosistent with their present material position and intellectual attainment that has serious setbacks as a result of social change in the country.

Some sort of formalised or constituted organizations of the nature of panchayat that have grown out of traditional caste councils are present among both the Qaum-e-Punjabian groups who claim Kshatriya origin. These organizations in the form of guild-cum-club are voluntary in nature but they also assume certain kinds of responsibilities for their respective groups and maintain regulur demographic records in regard to the entire group irrespective of their membership. This is done for quite a number of social objectives including welfare measures for the economically weak. The three Gujarati groups of Kachchi Meman, Halai Meman and Sunni Bohra jama't all claiming descent from Kshatriya or Brahmin castes, have similar group organizations among the Qaum-e-Punjabian groups. The leadership of the organizations among all these groups is, however, elected. The earlier tradition of caste-councils and the present day necessity of maintaining ethnic distinctiveness results in the emergence of such formalised organizations

among all these groups that assume some of the main functions of the caste council.

The Ismaili Shia both Bohra and Khoja are sect-cum-ethnic groups with a history of conversion from high Hindu castes. Besides the need for maintaining their ethnic boundaries the nature of their religious belief provides for some form of hereditary leadership at the top, the Dai-e-Mutlaq in the case of the Bohra and the Agha Khan in the case of the Khoja (Imami Ismaili Shia). The former appoints a chief known as *amil* for the local community to look after its socio-religious affairs and the latter has laid down rules of procedure for the conduct of affairs of the group members both at local and national levels. The leadership of the organizations deal with the affairs of the respective groups relating both to religious and social aspects and assume some of the main functions of the caste council exercising fairly effective control over the certain behaviours of their respective group members.

All groups that have a background of one occupation or another have the tradition of panchayats like caste-council. These are in a state of decline among those groups that have abandoned their traditional calling in the city such as the Momin (weavers) the Iraqi (distillers), the Besati (peddlers) and also those which are very small and widely scattered in the city such as the faqir (mendicants) and the nikare (fish mongers). Most groups that pursue their traditional occupations at least partially, preserve their councils which function more or less in a normal manner with adjustments in the urban situation, in the details of their working. Some panchayats like those of the Qureshi are capable of ostracising even wealthy and prominent members for violating group norms and those of the chick go to the extent of flogging the offending members of the group. The group council or panchayat is variously known as *malat*, *chatai*, *tat* and sometimes *anjuman* and is generally based on areas of origin of its members as also on areas of habitation in the city. These panchayats form their respective federations embracing the whole of Calcutta and often its adjoining areas.

Thus the Qureshi (Qasab) in the city have twelve such malats in. cluding two in the adjoining city of Howrah, the Chick have four, the Raie and the Mansuri have twentytwo each. Similar local panchayats characterise all the groups where the institution is present (*vide* Table 5) and which are concentrated in different areas in the city and have been drawn in from different areas of the same region. In case of several groups the local councils work in a sort of coordination with the

Table 5 : Groups and their Organizations of Varying Strength

Groups without traditional organization	Groups with traditional organizations formalised or constituted	Groups where traditional organizations are in a state of decline	Groups with strong traditional organization	
			with hereditary leadership	with elected leadership
1	2	3	4	5
Syed	Qaum-e-Punjabian (Delhi)	Momin (Ansari)	Qasab (Qureshi)	
Sheikh	Qaum-e-Punjabian (Anwla)	Iraqi	Chik (Qureshi)	Rai (green grocer)
Mughal	Dawoodi Bohra	Besati	Chidimar (Mirshikar)	
Pathan	Imami Ismaili Khoja	Kharadi	Mansoori	
Pakhtoon	Kachchi Meman	Patwa	Dafali	
Malik	Halai Meman	Hajjam	Qalander	
	Sunni Bohra	Chudihar	Faqir	
	Peshawari (including Awan, Kakazai, Kalal and Kashmiri-Peshawari)	Nikari	Dhobi	
			Shekhawati	
			Madi	
	Malayali (consisting mainly of Mopla)		Manihar	
			Lohar	
			Sonar	
			Teli	
			Meo	
			Sheikhji	
			Ghosi	
			Lal Begi	

councils in their home region leaving little scope for the offending member to scape without punishment.

Even among those groups where the regular traditional caste councils have gone into disuse, such as among the Momin and the Iraqi, the earlier tradition of panchayat asserts itself in an informal manner. The group members of particular locality or of common village or even adjoining villages are called upon to resolve inter personal problems relating to fellow members. The key roles in these informal panchayats are assumed by a few influential figures in the context of localities and often those belonging to different localities actively cooperate in resolving matters relating to the members of the beradari.

The panchayats among different groups vary in their structural patterns as they do in their functional details and in the nature and extent of authority over their respective members. The leadership of the panchayats is either elected or hereditary and in some cases even nominated or appointed by the supreme hereditary leadership of the group. The example of the latter is provided by both the Ismaili Shia sect-cum-ethnic groups namely the Imami Ismaili (Khoja) and Ismaili Shia (Dawoodi Bohra). Elected leadership is come across among the ethnic groups that have constituted or formalised their group organisations such as the Qaum-e-Punjabian groups of Delhi and Anwla, the Kachchi and Halai Meman groups and the Sunni Bohra. Among the groups wedded to traditional occupations Raie alone have replaced their traditional hereditary panchayat leadership by elected ones. The large majority of the groups (*vide* Table 5) still continue to retain the hereditary leadership of their panchayats and among a few of them like the Qureshi and the Chick the attempt to introduce elected form of leadership has been successfully resisted.

The panchayats among Rajasthani groups do not have any fixed and permanent leadership nor are the meetings of the panchayat specially called the resolved problems. The members of the commensal group meeting on such occasions as marriage or funeral resolve all pending cases relating to their fellow members.

The hereditary leadership of panchayats are mainly vested in the chief known as *sardar* or *choudhry* often assisted by assistant chief or *naeb*. A *chadidar* (lit staff bearer) is invariably present to work as massenger to inform the members about the date and place of the service according to traditional norms. In case of several groups the chadidar is a barber or one from outside the group.

The panchayats are called upon to deal with a wide range of problems at different levels, generally combining welfare activities

with measures directed towards social control. Among Qaum-e-Punjabian groups, both the Meman groups and also among Sunni Bohra the main emphasis is on welfare activities through resolution of interpersonal disputes etc, also form part of the deliberations. The same is true of the Ismailia sects. Management of mosques, burial grounds, etc., the latter for the exclusive use of the group concerned, also includes among the functions of these group organizations. All the group organizations strive to maintain the endogamous character of the respective groups though measures directed towards attaining this objective vary at different levels. The groups wedded to traditional occupations such as the Qureshi, the Chick and the Raie, etc., adopt stronger measures than Qaum-e-Punjabian Meman and Sunni Bohra often resorting to ostracism and boycott. Among groups wedded to traditional occupation finalisation of marriage negotiations between group members, fixation of dates for marriage as well as other details such as relating to dowry and *mehar*, etc., are included in the functions of group panchayats without whose help these cannot take place. Even among those groups where the group panchayat has been weakened or has gone into disuse, the presence of a few noted individuals belonging to the group is necessary at the finalisation ceremony. Caste cases go to show that certain kinds of liabilities, as a result of broken marriages, are accepted by the panchayat, particularly when the parents of the bride, thus affected, are poor. This was observed particularly among the Qureshi.

The panchayat not only reflects the cohesiveness of the groups but also reinforces internal solidarity by being source of strength for its members in the moments of crisis. It is an important agency not only for the protection of its members and in securing for them a fair deal in interpersonal relationship within the group but is also an important source for equipping them to face the problems of life in the urban situation. The panchayats of the Qureshi, the Chick and the Raie with their respective coordinated networks and of the dairy farmers the Ghosi and Sheikhji are capable of safeguarding their economic interest. Some of the most virulent movements for social uplift through education are observed at the level of the groups and the panchayats are the agencies of action in establishing educational institutions, particularly among the Raie[10] and the Qureshi[11]. Among some other groups like the Dafali, the Qalander and the Mirshikar and Chudihar, etc., where particular saints are revered, common rituals

10. *See* Appendix III for a list of educational institutions run by the group organization.

11. *Ibid.*

such as urs, fatiha and sandal are performed collectively through the panchayats.

The panchayats usually function according to customary procedures, the deliberations of which are generally conducted by hereditary leadership which is usually not conversant with Islamic law. The questions dealt with at panchayat level relate also to marriage, divorce, inheritance and succession, etc., which require correct interpretation of relevant rules laid down by religion. The elders of the panchayat arrive at their own decisions in this matters in the light of their own understanding of religious rules as well as their respective customary practices or their rationalisations of these practices. The decisions, though sometimes not in conformity with the Islamic law, are usually accepted by the members concerned. However, in cases, where the decisions of the panchayat are challanged on the basis of their non-conformity with the Islamic law the matter is refferred for expert opinion to a *mufti* and the panchayat submits to such an opinion unquestioningly and Islamic jurisprudence is allowed to prevail over the customary practices.

It may perhaps be worthmentioning that in the amorphous situation of the cosmopolis all the members of a particular ethnic group are not covered by the operation of the panchayat of the group concerned. Panchayats exercise their authority effectively only on those members of their respective ethnic groups who are either known to have a specific background of the area they have been drawn in or those who, irrespective of the area they have come from, are associated in the city in the context of a particular locality in a more or less stable manner.

The presence of panchayat among a number of ethnic groups can be seen as a persistence of a strong tradition of caste councils. These have continued to operate in the city assuming changing roles in the urban environment and are not regarded by some of their leaders as ideal agencies of social control, particularly in respect of those sections of their groups that have abandoned their traditional occupations. The relatively increasing importance of these councils as agencies of social welfare in the urban situation than of social control demonstrates a shift in their roles and is among factors that account for their continued existence in the city.

FOOD AND POLLUTION

Calcutta being predominantly a city of males, a very large proportion of its citizens both Hindu and Muslim have their food in public eating houses. Factories, commercial establishments and offices which

employ people belonging to different sections and different levels of society encourage the establishment of canteens where interdining takes place on large scale. Many of those who have their own kitchen frequent tea shops and restaurants which are visited by a variety of people belonging to all castes, creeds and religions without any obvious restrictions. In Calcutta restaurants restricted to particular caste or community are rare if not completely absent. Bengalees generally have a fair reputation for not observing the restrictions in interdining and among a large number of them the rules laid down by caste in this regard has long been inoperative. Partly due to the lead given by Bengali Hindus in discarding restrictions in interdining and partly due to the pressure of modern forces, in the urban situation, the non-Bengali Hindus in the city and probably elsewhere are progressively discarding the traditional restrictions in commensality.

The multiplication of the number of restaurants and eating houses in general as also in areas inhabited by non-Bengali Hindus such as Rajasthani and Marwari, well known for the observance of the traditional rules of commensality is significant. Quite a few of these eating houses are run and managed by the members of these communities. Certain Chinese and Muslim dishes have gained wide popularity among sophisticated circles across comunities. Thus the prevailing air in the city is against the operation of restrictions in interdining, though it must be admitted that everyone in the city is not outside the sphere of operation of the traditional rules in regard to food and pollution in the Hindu Society.

Islam does not recognise inherent impurity or inequality of individuals within its fold. *Certain kinds of impurity or defecation that may affect all the members of the society may be removed in Identical manner through physical cleanliness and ablution.* These relate to food, drink, women during certain periods and also to certain items of offerings to Gods and spirits other than the 'one God', the details of which are laid down in the Quran[12]. In interpersonal relationship, however, no one is supposed to be permanently unclean and the question of one necessarily polluting the other, beyond the tabood range, does not arise.

Apart from the dominant climate of intense contact between people of varied backgrounds, across communities, the religious

12. "O ye who believe ! intoxicants and gambling, dedication of stones, and divination by arrows are an abomination,—of satans' handiwork : Eschew such abomination, that ye may prosper." The Quran S. V. 93 : 271. Tr. Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *Ibid.* (S. V. : 99 : 273).

practices of Muslims bring them together within mosques and on occasions of other ceremonies. This results in the general unawareness, on sophisticated levels, about the presence of a kind of reluctance among several groups particularly within the categories wedded to occupation to be exposed to contact to some others, believed by them to be inferior to themselves, particularly in matters of interdining. The disproportionate representation of various ethnic categories within the total Muslim population is also partly responsible for this unawareness on the part of the members of the numerically dominant section as for most members commensal relations remain confined to the group. Again reluctance to the exposure to contacts in interdining is confined to less sophisticated sections of several groups within the category wedded to traditional occupations and is operative beyond the public eating houses and restaurants where the backgrounds of the customers are not supposed to be known. Taboos on items of food are generally observed.

A section of the Shia sect which is more orthodox in following religion avoids eating with *mushrik* or polytheists and among the Ismaili sects the Bohra also observe similar restrictions. This is because of a belief in polytheism to be of defiling nature which can only be removed through change in belief from polytheism to monotheism.

Within the Muslim community several occupational groups like the Chudihar, the Mansuri and the Raie disfavour eating with the Qalander and the Lal Begi. Neither Ghosi nor Dafali will eat in the house of Dhobi, while none of them including Qalander, Hajjam, Iraqi and Qureshi would like to accept food from the Lal Begi. The Lal Begi can, however, accept food from all other groups. The rules relating to interdining among these groups are, however, not very elaborate among these groups nor the violation of these rules generally becomes a subject matter to be dealt with in group panchayats. Abstinence from commensal relationship, though voluntary and self imposed is nevertheless present at least among less sophisticated sections of these groups.

Among the Rajasthani groups rules of interdining exist in a more elabrorate form and groups enjoying higher status are not supposed to dine with one of the lower status. The Shekhawati, as for example, is granted a status higher than the Madi and as a result, even if a few friends from the latter group are invited to a feast at the house of the former, they are fed separately.

The most disfavoured group is the Lal Begi (sweepers) from whom no other group will receive food. Qalander and Dhobi come next with whom other groups avoid having commensal relationship

while these will not eat with the Lal Begi. Others were not found to be observing any noticeable restriction in the matter of interdining.

Social distance in the operation of shariat, contrary to the observation of Guha (1965 : pp. 168-169) with regard to village mosque, was not observable. Congregation in the mosque, in the city do not reflect any noticeable social distance where even a nikari was observed to be officiating as imam at one place and a faqir (Shah) as *moallim* at another. A Lal Begi may, however, go into voluntary self withdrawal into one of the rear rows in the congregation though he will immediately admit that it is not superimposed.

Consciousness of the 'higher status' of several groups and 'uncleanliness' of the occupation are stated as factors determining commensal relationship among occupational groups at lower levels. But to whatever extent it is present, the idea of cleanliness presupposes its violation to be of polluting nature, though elaborate rules involving methods for the removal of this pollution are not available beyond sanitary or physical cleanliness.

Thus it will appear that in spite of powerful forces both of the 'great tradition' and of modern outlook prevailing in the urban setting, charged with the discouragement of the continuance of caste norms, a section of the Muslim society, particularly at lower level, continues to adhere to restrictions in interdining, if not in Physical contact, necessitated by the operation of shariat. This is of significance.

The most common and usual pattern of interdining, however, is one confined to one's kins and to the known range within the ethnic group. This is also adjusted to class levels within the group. Friends and neighbours are accommodated as far as possible. The size of the ethnic group and differential economic stratifications within also determine the range and composition of the usual commensal groups. The symbolic ritual equality of the members among several ethnic groups is expressed in such terms as *tat* or *chatai* (meaning mat or carpet) upon which such members can sit, smoke and eat together. The expelled members loose the title to such an equality. This phenomenon is particularly observable among such groups as Qureshi, Chick, Mansuri, Dafali, Mirshikar drawn from the northern region and Shekhawati, Madi, Manihar, Teli and Lohar, etc., from Rajasthan.

INTER-ETHNIC RANKING

Ranking of status groups in a society is both a matter of a large measure of concensus in ideas and of practical operation. While looking for a system of ranking in Muslim society in Calcutta we have

to keep in mind certain important limiting factors operating in our urban field situation. These are :

(a) The class structure based on economic disparity, in the modern competitive capitalistic economy has often tended to follow ethnic lines, but it is not always consistent with status hierarchy as we shall see in subsequent pages. In class structure the business communities have gained precedence over the *nawabs* the former aristocracies, the zamindars and owners of land. This is evident from the social prominence of merchants and office bearers of Oriental Chamber of Commerce and the dominating position of this category of people in cultural and social welfare organizations sports clubs etc.

(b) The class status of the latter categories has either declined or is in a state of sharp decline. This is not only true of all the three aristocratic families of Mysore, Awadh and Murshidabad and a few smaller ones in a relative manner but also of all the groups enjoying higher 'ascribed status' in a general way. The trading communities such as the Bohra, the Qaum-e-Punjabian and the Meman groups and the Ismaili Khoja generally constitute higher classes. A section of the Iraqi who have a fair share in the hide and skin trade and of numerically dominant Momin who run mediocre hotels, restaurants and several other business establishments, as .also a section of the Besati, of the Peshawari, a few among the Tamil groups of Maraykar and Rowther include into the higher economic group or class.

(c) Numerical dominance of the Momin is also of great significnnce in the context. This dominance coupled with considerable consciousness of 'ethnicity' within the group has resulted in concentration of political power in their hands, in whatever amount it is available for the Muslim community in the city[13]. This trend is definitely a recent phenomena which has accelerated its pace during the post-Independence period.

(d) An attitude of antagonism,[14] though confined to a small

13. Of the total number of seats on which Muslim candidates were returned to the West Bengal Legislative Assembly from Calcutta the Ansaris alone captured 33.30% in 1969 and 66.60% in 1971 and 1972 elections respectively.

14. "For centuries Momin *beradari* and all the beradaries with occupational backgrounds have been the victim of the groups that are well known for their love for wealth and high positions. These beradaries were made accustomed to kind of life befitting of animals, The materialist monopolists of religious knowledge, in spite of a common bound of religion had closed the door of religious knowledge on them. The inheriters of sword and land (obviously meaning Syed, Sheik, Mughal and Pathan) in their avarice and greed had made the life of the numerically dominant groups within their community very different....." Extract from the

section of the dominant Momin, towards the Muslim groups with higher 'ascribed' status in spite of their having been receded into insignificance, is often puzzling for many[15]. But it is not difficult to understand this phenomenon in the light of a necessity on the part of the bourgeois class among them for the perpetuation of its socio-political leadership on the vast multitude of their impoverished and backward group members for its own sake, without any positive programme of their social uplift.

(e) Numerical dominance of the Momin does not only reflect in the quantum of their representation in the municipal corporation, Legislative Assembly of the State, welfare societies and socio-religious institutions of the Muslim community, of general and common nature, but also has gone a long way in removing the stigma attached to their weaving background. None of the proverbial attributes of derogatory nature (Risley : 348-350 : 1892) used in describing individual or group character of the Momin is heard or believed. Internal cohesiveness of the group has improved to the extent that the enormously large number of *gotes* and divisions, characterising the group (Ibbetson : 413-416 : 1883) in the past are no longer heard of. The progress made by them in the field of education and their entry into learned professions during the last few decades is not inconsiderable. The same is true in varying degrees of the Raie and Qureshi who have considerable numerical strength in the city.

(f) Linguistic and sectarian considerations make certain groups appear to be less integrated with the main body than the rest and having fewer contacts with other groups. This is true in case of the Imami Ismaili Shia (Khoja) and to a lesser extent of the Dawoodi Bohra, both of whom are distinct sectarian groups with their Gujrati background. The Tamil and Malayali groups are distinct linguistically though on sectarian grounds they have wider affiliations. Bengali and Hindustani speaking Muslims are interchangeably bilingual particularly in situations of intensive contacts, besides a cross cutting relationship on the basis of sects works as a cohering factor. The foreigners like the Afghan, the Iranians, the Chinese and the Tibetan Muslims are quite outside the social periphery, though certain socio-political events appear to have brought them closer emotionally and in spatial context at any rate.

(g) The cosmopolitan situation of amorphous character does not

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presidential address of Janab A. A. Sheikh, dated April 21, 1940 in Patna District. Momin Conference (*vide* Weekly Momin Dunia, Patna Vol, I, No. 6, Sept, 21, 1971).

15. *Vide* Editorial note of the journal referred to above.

encourage one to interact in detail on whatever hierarchical norms that exist in the larger society comprising of the entire hinterland, nor is one's knowledge about the other as adequate and thorough as it is in rural settings. This tends to develop a general trend indicating lack of concern about the observance of hierarchical norms and stratified interactions of consistent pattern in day to day affairs.

(h) On the level of expressing conscious ideals in the sophisticated circles there is more talk in favour of equality than of inequality, particularly of inherent nature. The prevailing climate, at least on superficial level, even among the Hindus, is that of one disfavouring inequality, which has been officially abolished at least in the sphere of political democracy and is being reinforced through trade unionism and political activities. This has its impact on the Muslim society as well.

(i) The Islamic 'great tradition' as it operates through, daily, weekly and annual congregations in mosques and *idgah* and other ceremonies consciously discourages the demonstration of differentiation of any kind except those based on age and sex. Women do not attend mass congregations in mosques or other public places and, where situation is properly handled, children who have not attained *bloogh* or adulthood are made to stand in rear rows. While lining up for *namaz* in rows facing *qibla*, the forearms and little toes of every congregator are supposed to touch those of the other fellow congregator, standing beside. The *Shafeites* and Ahl-e-Hadith insist on this more than other sectarian groups on grounds of religion and no sect is opposed to or even discourages this. Ritually, at least in the sphere of shariat as it is laid down and operates, a Muslim is conscious of his equality with other Muslims. This overt assertion of equality is demonstrated in a limited but nevertheless important sphere of religion and not the entire religious sphere particularly in the operation of *tariqat* and its silsilas i.e., chains of descent and institution of khanqah as we saw in detail.

(j) Lstly on account of the extreme diversification of economic activities. perfect knowledge among ethnic groups with regard to all others does not exist, nor is it expected to. It is present within the regional framework and sometimes goes beyond regional boundaries. Knowledge about other groups belonging to different regions is generally vague and depends mainly upon the intensity of contacts in the neighbourhood, through participations in functions and ceremonies of religious character, and in business and employment, etc. Sect has been a factor in bringing diverse regional groups in closer contact. The situation, characterised by urban features, demands that the degree or depth of interaction of stratified nature should be limited, and to the

extent it is present, it manifests itself more at lower levels of society than at higher levels, though it is generally present in some form in social sentiment.

Thus, as we shall see, in spite of the limiting conditions of incompatibility between ascribed and achieved statuses, numerical dominance of a group of traditionally inferior status, an environment less congenial for the observance of hierarchical norms and overt denial of the presence of social inequality under the influence of Islamic great tradition as it operates in a limited sphere of religion, we do not fail to notice a pattern of ranking in the Muslim society in Calcutta. The picture may often appear hazy and confusing, on account of our field situation, but the outline of its pattern can be observed unmistakably.

- The presence of a total of sixty Muslim ethnic groups, mainly of endogamous character, drawn from four main regional backgrounds, provides us with an opportunity to notice the pattern of their ranking on the basis of aspects of their stratified interaction. Although the interactions of these groups are not limited within the Muslim society alone and they function within a larger framework of the city's dominant Hindu population, often with a certain measure of interdependence, yet they constitute an identifiable community maintaining a boundary of its own. Within this boundary they have a pattern of interaction of stratified nature although the urban situation virtually never brings a sizable proportion of them together in a systematically stratified interaction.

Firstly, we notice that birth is observed as a criterion of superiority and inferiority. The Syed, if the correctness of his geneology is not in doubt, is held by common consent among all regional groups, in highest esteem on account of his being a descendant from the Prophet through his daughter Hazrat Fatema and her husband Hazrat Ali. No one among the persons interviewed, belonging to different groups in our sample, was disinclined to accord Syed the highest ascribed social status in the society. Though leadership or imamate in the mosque and other formal observances of ceremonies, in accordance with *shariat* may come from any individual, irrespective of his ethnic background, the leadership in the sacred spiritual domain,the tariqat is a virtual monopoly of the Syed who share this sometimes with the Sheikh[16] and

16. The Sheikh has been a surname widely used by a large number of ethnic groups at different levels such as the Momin, the Qasab the Kshatriya Muslims and the general Muslim peasants, etc. Here it means to indicate the descendants of the Prophets' tribesmen and the Sahabas such as of Hazrat Abu Bakar Siddique. Hazrat Umer, Hazrat Usman, though these people do not necessarily use Sheikh as a surname.

rarely with Mughals and Pathans. The spiritual power that the pir are supposed to yield, hardly percolates below the Sheikh and seldom outside the block consisting of the two, as well as the Mughal and the Pathan. The passing of this power from the Syed to these groups are generally in the form of delegation and do not originate in them as the founders of these silsilas are mainly Syeds and sometimes the Sheikhs as well. Though obviously nothing appears to stand in the way of the transferance of these spiritual powers to other groups outside, it remains confined to the block and mainly within the Syed and the Sheikh who are often kinsmen, the latter having been the descendants from the *Sahaba* the companions of the Prophet as well as from his tribe.

The Mughal and the Pathan with their ruling and fighting background have long been intimately associated with the Syed and the Sheikh and in some cases have intermarried with them. These four groups, on account of being the earliest Muslims on the Indian soil and among the first to have been exposed to Islam developed intimate interrelations in socio-political spheres. This resulted in their ownership of land and sharing of power in course of centuries. All these factors contributed to the formation of a sort of block consisting of these four groups with interactions on the basis of level of shared high status. This interaction between these groups results in intermarriages between these groups on a scale much larger than with groups outside the block, though they remain largely endogamous. Intermarriages between these groups are more frequent among the smaller sects like the Shia and the Ahmadia, particularly in the urban context.

Thus we see that while the Syed are accorded higher status not only on account of their descent from the Prophet but also as a result of this descent, they have a ritual status in the sphere of tariqat, if not in the sphere of shariat. Other groups in the block do not have a similar ritual basis, yet they constitute a range within which the Syed marry or intermarry and often the spiritual power of the pir is delegated to them.

The Malik as well as all the groups drawn from superior Hindu castes of Brahmin and Kshatriyas have been conveniently grouped (under Block) II. While the former's insistence on endogamy in all circumstances and even disallowing the Syed to intermarry within the group, betrays their tribal or caste background, their clientship *iradat* of the pir drawn from the Syed and from those of the Syed delegate their power amply demonstrates their position in the hierarchy. The impressive superiority of other groups, namely, the Bohra, the Khoja, the Meman and the Qaum-e-Punjabian in terms of achieved status,

leads to the difficulty of obtaining a concensus among them about their position as subsequent to the Mughal and the Pathan. There are claims of equality with them while the higher position of the Syed is accepted readily and of the Sheikh hesitatingly. The adoption of Sheikh as a surname by some of them, particularly by a section of Qaum-e-Punjabian, to elevate their status, however, explains the position and status of the Sheikh in their •estimation. Their expressed disapproval of marrying Syed women lest they may be disrespectful of the group is also significant in this connection. This abstinence is not generally present among either the Mughal or the Pathan and shows the relative position of the group in the block *vis-a-vis* the previous block.

The insistence of each group within the block on endogamy and its strict observance is a characteristic in which they differ from groups in Block I, who claim precedence over them. It is on the basis of this characteristic that in spite of the Maliks background of not being wedded to traditional occupation, and their claim of a Syed ancestry, they are grouped with the block drawn from high Hindu castes. The ethnic groups in Block II also share certain traits of higher status groups relating to their way of life such as freedom of choice of occupation, non-mannual work, observance of purda by their women and zeal and punctiliousness in the observance of religion. Taking all these into consideration they are ranked only next to the groups in Block I.

Ethnic groups having a tradition of being tied to one occupation or another, forming the main body of the Muslim population in Calcutta have been grouped into the subsequent blocks. Those pursuing or having a tradition of pursuing clean occupation are grouped together in Block III and roughly account for over 80 per cent of the total population of the Muslims, while those with a background of 'unclean occupation' of sweeping and scavanging constitute Block IV.

The very fact of their being tied to one traditional occupation or another, however 'clean' in social estimation, results in their being graded socially only next to groups in Blocks II and of course to Block I, of which they are clients in the spiritual domain of tariqat. The idea of 'high' and 'low' with regard to status in present among groups within the block. The groups that have freed themselves from the shackles of traditional occupation and have diversified their occupational persuits, namely, the Momin and the Iraqi are generally accorded with higher status within the block. The numerical dominance of the Momin is of further help to them in achieving this status.

Such features as the degree of diversification in occupational persuits, entry into general and particularly learned occupations, emergence of an affluent section within the ethnic group, withdrawal of women from work and their veiling and progressive adoption of higher style of life determine the relatively higher status of an ethnic groug within the block. Viewed in the light of these widespread notions with regard to superiority and inferiority of the social status of the groups, it is evident that groups like the Qureshi, Chick, Chudihar, Mansuri, Raie and Kharadi occupy intermediate positions within the block, next only to the Peshawari occupational groups, Momin, Iraqi and Besati while the Mirshikar, Dafali, Qalander Patwa and Faqir occupy a position below them in the status hierarchy.

It must, however, be admitted that the details of the inter-ethnic hierarchy within the block are not easy to work out on account of conflicting claims, but that of the block as a whole is not in doubt. This is so on account of their service background and also a large measure of agreement particularly at relatively non-sophisticated levels or, more appropriately, at the level which is comparatively more tradition bound than others in matters of belief and practices.

The groups that have a background of scavenging and sweeping occupation mainly represented by the Lal Begi constitute the fourth block. The inferior status accorded to the Lal Begi, virtually at the lowest end of the hierarchy is passively accepted by them. This finds expression in the non-acceptance of cooked food from the Lal Begi by the groups in the 'clean' occupational block such as the Dafali, Qalander and Faqir who often co-reside in common localities. The Lal Begi, however, accept such food from all these groups. Usual abstinence of the Muslims from employing the Lal Begi as cooks in their houses, while the Christians do so, is also due to the same reason, While the Lal Begi are *never denied entry into the mosques* they speak of the difficulties encounteed by them in getting their dead buried in common Muslim burial grounds. This is at any rate true of a section among them that is known for his observance of Hindu festivals such as Durga Puja and Kali Puja, etc., and his close relationship with Hindu scavenging groups of Hela and Rout. The section that claims to be joining the *namaz* congregation, at least occasionally, is stated to be preferring one of the rear rows or at least avoiding the front rows. This is on account of a belief among them about their own impurity as a result of pursuing a traditional occupation so widely believed to be 'unclean'.

Thus we see that although the stratified interactions of elaborate

nature are not very clearly observable, the basic elements of inter-ethnic stratification of ascribed nature are present and are operative in the Muslim society. This is in spite of the fact that the picture gets considerably blurred due not only to certain cultural features of the Muslim society but also due to the over all effect of our field situation of massive urban character. The emergent picture clearly indicates that the highest and the lowest positions of the Syed and the Lal Begi respectively, are absolutely clear and find general agreement. The positions of intermediate groups are also determined on the basis of the prevailing notions with regard to superiority and inferiority of status. In spite of claims and counter claims of one group *vis-a-vis* others as also of the assertion of equality of all, the positions of the blocks or cluster of groups with regard to each other, as indicated, are not much in dispute.

While status hierarchy of the ethnic groups are defined geneologically, it is not entirely non-ritualistic. In that sphere of religion known as tariqat the leadership of the group in Block I is practically monopolistic, not only in our field situation but also as far as it could be ascertained, in respect of other areas in the country. True, some amount of 'sanctity' is attached to the faqir (shah) or mendicants who have begging as their traditional occupation and are sometimes employed in the lower cadre of astanas and mazars where they often perform fatcha for the devotees from the lower strata of society. But they never assume the role of the spiritual guides or the pir, who can accept offerings but can never beg or receive alms as the faqir can do. Another example is that of the Dafali whose traditional occupation has been making of drums and musical instruments including those used in temples. In spite of their handling of skin for the purpose, some amount of 'charm' or magical power is believed to be traditionally associated with them which they are called upon to use, in warding off certain malignant spirit[17], among the lower ranks. But they too invoke the pirs from whom they claim to derive their 'power'. They do not act as pir themselves even for the category of people they perform their service.

Excepting, in a limited way, in the astanas and khanqahs where either a pir or a *motawalli* has the main charge and the functionaries (sometimes the faqir) the mureeds and the devotees are in subordinate positions, common rituals do not incorporate members of

17. Young girls in their maidenhood are generally believed, particularly at lower levels of society, to be possessed by a spirit called Sheikh Saddo. This may/perhaps actually be hysteria or a certain symptoms of sex repression.

diverse groups to demonstrate interaction of stratified nature. Rituals performed under shariat show negative stratified interactions. In the non-ritual fields, however, distinct occupational and non-occupational groups give clear evidence of incorporation as a functional whole forming in a way a part of the larger society around, maintaining of course their distinct cultural identity.

Having described the nature of occupational specialization of the Muslim ethnic groups in the city, the features of their inner organization and the pattern of their endogamy and their commensal interrelationship we have endeavoured thus far to present the picture of the complex nature of inter-ethnic ranking among the Muslims of Calcutta. It is obvious that in spite of certain degree of consistency in ranking in terms of four blocks of ethnic groups and general concensus about placing the Syed at the top and the Lal Begi at the bottom the system of ranking is not precisely an order of ritual stratification which is typical of the Hindu caste system. In the next chapter we shall endeavour to observe the position of Muslims within the larger social framework of the city including the dominant Hindu society, before discussing in detail to what extent the Muslim inter group ranking may be regarded as the caste system.

SUMMARY

Of the segments of Muslim population in Calcutta reflecting national, regional, ethnic and sectarian characters, the ethnic segments, drawn from within the country are of great significance. Over sixty distinct groups of ethnic character, identified within the Muslim population in the city, drawn from the four main regions in the country with further segmentation, of cross-cutting nature, on sectarian lines, provide us with an opportunity for observation of certain aspects of their interrelationship. The main bulk of the population as well as the largest number of groups are drawn from the northern region, constituting the valley of the Ganges and its delta which either form its natural hinterland or are situated in the immediate environment of the city.

The groups are of the nature of closed groups based on descent, descent-*cum*-occupation and often also on a common social history. They call themselves variously as *qaum-jamat*, *jat*, *zat*, or *beradari*, either showing merely dialectal variation in denoting the same object or a difference in terminology used at various levels of society. The internal structure of the groups, however, varies : some having *gotra* or clans and others without it.

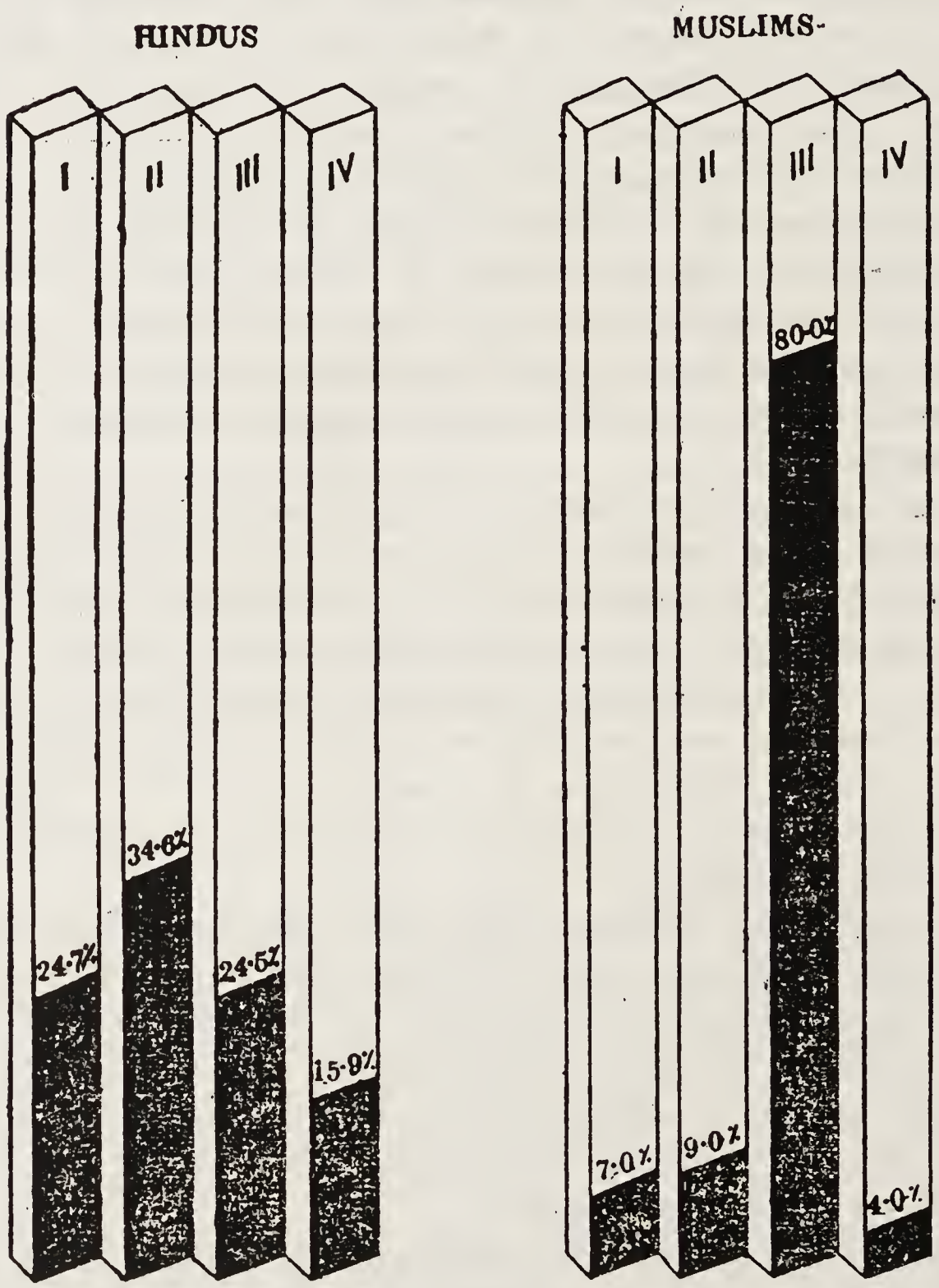
Endogamy is a common feature in all groups with only some laxity among groups within Block I, particularly among sects that have small number of followers. It is a must for groups in other blocks Those of pure descent, born of endogamous union, *i.e.*, *najeeb-ut-tarafain*, *asli* or *sudh* are distinguished from *moulazada*, *bisser* or *birrahe*, born of marriages of the members of the groups in Block I, with those in other blocks and even members of different groups within blocks other than Block I. Unusual economic prosperity of some individuals in several groups often mitigates the severity of the stigma but does not remove it altogether. Cases of individual attempts at upward mobility, through adoption of surnames from higher status groups are available but are rare. Group movements are a common feature among the groups in Block III generally wedded to traditional occupations, through adoption of new surnames suggesting a more respectable origin.

Occupational specialisation on hereditary lines, though not necessarily having a positive correlation with ethnicity in the concept of society in Islam, is a characteristic of the predominantly large number of groups in the city. But excepting a few specialised services, a large number of services of hereditary nature are not restricted to Muslim society alone and are meaningful in the wider context including the Hindu society. Identification of a section of a group abandoning traditional occupation continues with the group for all practical purposes including marriage.

Restriction on commensal relationship does not take any definite pattern but is observable only at the border line of the third and the fourth blocks, particularly in relation to Lal Begi (sweepers). Physical contacts between all groups, having common sects, continue in the mosque and places of worship, as well as in other spheres as a result of the urban mode of living. The latter is generally true of all groups outside the fold of Muslim society.

In spite of a number of limiting factors arising out of urban mode of living or as a result of the operation of the Islamic Great Tradition, principles governing inter-ethnic ranking are seen in operation. The basic elements of inter—ethnic stratification of ascribed nature, present in the Muslim society are mainly governed by secular criteria, excepting in the sphere of the khanqah where the pir drawn from Block I has ritual superiority over his clients.

CASTE COMPOSITION OF
HINDUS & MUSLIMS
IN CALCUTTA



HINDUS (AS IN 1931 CENSUS)

I BRAHMIN

II KAYESTHA, BAIDYA, KSHATRIYA, BAISHNAB, ETC.

III MAHISHYA, SUBARNABANIK, GOALA, SATGOPE, ETC.

IV KALU&TELI, DHOBI, CHAMAR, TANTI, MUCHI, ETC.

MUSLIMS (BASED ON OBSERVED ESTIMATES)

I II III&IV AS IN TABLE SHOWING HIERARCHY

Ethnic groups with/without Caste Organisation Hierarchically shown with Sect Affiliations & Regional Groupings

Hierarchical order	Sects*	Groups without caste organisation	Groups with weak or formalised organisation	Groups with traditional or sectarian caste organisation of considerable strength
I	SUNNI SHIA' AHL-E-HADITH AHMADIA	*Regular types among most regional groups* SAYED SHEIKH MOGHAL PATHAN		
II	SUNNI	*Northern Region* (Gangetic Valley & Delta) Malik	*Northern Region* (Gangetic Valley & Delta) Qaum-e-Punjabian (Delhi) Qaum-E-Punjabian (Anwla) Punjabi (Rajputs)	
		North W. Region Kashmiri	*North W. Region* (Peshawari) Awan, Kakazai Kalal Kashmiri Peshawari	
	AHL-E-HADITH	*Southern Region* (Tamil) Maraykar Rowther Labbai	*Southern Region* (Malayali) Musalliyar Mapilas Rowther Keyci	
	AHMADIA		*Western Region* Meman (Kachi) Meman (Halai)	*Western Region* Dawoodi Bohra Imami Ismaili Shia
III	SUNNI		*Northern Region* (Gangetic Valley & Delta) Momin (Ansari) Ranki (Iraqi) Darzee Nikari Patwa Besati	*Northern Region* (Gangetic Valley & Delta) Qureshi, Chik Rai, Mansari Churihar, Hajjam Dhobi, Mirshikar Dafali, Qalander Faqir (Shah) Sheikhjee Meo, Ghosi *Western Region* Nilgar (Shekhawati & Madi) Manihar, Sonar, Lohar, Teli, Dhobi
IV	SUNNI			*Northern Region* (Gangetic Valley & Delta) Lal Begi (Sweeper)

* Sects are not in hierarchical order

7

Muslims within a Larger Social Framework in the City

Being one of the major centres of commerce and industry in the country, Calcutta accommodates a population of over 4·6 million. Through a network of commerce the city is linked on the one hand with the whole of north and north-eastern parts of India and even with areas far beyond it in the country and on the other with outside world through its port. With the systematic expansion and intensification of this network of commerce and trade and with the development of industrial complex, a very large number of people from all parts of the country have been drawn into the city to form part of the larger urban complex.

Ideally a city should provide an opportunity for the liberation of the individual from various kinds of shackles of rendering or receiving services or of ties that usually bind him to his village within a socio-economic system. As the system is inoperative in the city, association of voluntary nature should replace or at least predominate over those of non-voluntary nature. The presence of a large number of ethnic groups with their organizations, however, presents a picture quite different from what can be ideally expected in as large a city as Calcutta, although the ties of the kind that are charcteristic of the village, no longer remain operative. Also undeniably certain kinds of changes of the nature of comparatively great freedom in choosing occupations are observable, yet one clings to the traditional occupation so long as it does not become utterly uneconomic.

Examples from the Churihar and also from the groups of dairy farmers, namely, the Meo, the Ghosi and the Sheikhjee may substantiate the point. Mechanisation and large scale organization of glass and ceramic industry and setting up of plants at Agra, for large scale production of glass bangles, with the help of Japanese machinery brought a severe crisis for the Churihar of Ghosh Bagan in north Calcutta,

who were the main producers of the article in north eastern India. Yet in spite of this crisis some 30 per cent of their outmoded *bhatti* continues to work, though often irregularly, using the broken pieces of glass collected through rag-pickers, and many of them live precariously depending on the income of their women through house-to-house supply of the bangle. Similarly with the establishment of the State owned dairy at Haringhata, a strong and persistant drive against *khatals* in the city caused economic ruination of Ghosi, Sheikhjee and Meo of Saudagarpatti at B. T. Road in north Calcutta. Yet many among them buoyantly clung to their traditional occupation and in spite of heavy odds, the area remains, though at a comparatively small scale, an important centre of milk supply in the city to the extent that the price of milk determined at its weekly market is accepted as the authoritative price in the whole city.

This is simply to emphasise that in spite of tremendous change in the mode of production, gradual mechanisation of industries, multiplication of a very large number of new occupations and development of impersonal relations among groups in the functioning of urban economy, hereditary occupations continue to play their part wherever they have scope to operate. The mode of their operation has definitely undergone change, the study of which is bound to bring interesting facts on the surface. Here we shall restrict ourselves to a 'general observation' of the part played by Muslim occupational groups in the socio-economic life of the city as a whole particularly with reference to its dominant Hindu population.

Quite a number of services rendered to the city are mainly by the Muslim groups and form either their traditional or non-traditional occupations. The presence of a cotton carder (Mansuri) and very often of a butcher (Chick) is a necessity even in non-Muslim districts of the city. The finer wood work is done exclusively by Muslim Kharadi. Tailoring and embroidery work as also bakery and book-binding are urban trades and have largely been Muslim occupations, though considerable changes have recently occurred affecting the virtual monopoly of Muslims in these trades. The tailors of Rajabagan, Bartalla, Santoshpur and other areas around the city were found to be catering not only to the needs of the city but also, through a network of impersonal relationship, to those of areas far beyond the confines of Calcutta. Similarly a large variety of embroidery work is done mainly by Muslim artisans in the city. Book-binding and bakery have also been the exclusive occupations of the Muslims but considerable changes have been occurring in these trades in recent

times. Cattle trade has traditionally been in the hands of Sheikhjee in north Calcutta and the area remains an important cattle market in the city. Sheikhjee, Ghosi and Meo have also been dairy farmers controlling a substantial part of the city's milk supply until the establishment of Haringhata and they are still in the trade.

The hide and skin trade is mainly handled by the Muslims. The British and the German merchants in the line during the developing phase of the trade in the city found it impossible to work with non-Muslims above a certain level. The association of the Muslims with the trade developed in them entrepreneures and the entire trade passed on into the hands of the Bengali and the Punjabi Muslims as well as the Iraqis from Bihar and U. P. Some of them became conversant with other natural and synthetic articles in the line and established rubber and later plastic industries around the city. Before the entry such noted firms as the Tatas, the Lever Brothers and Godrej, etc., into the trade the soap industry was also mainly in the hands of Muslims.

Occupations relating to sea and river navigation have been largely manned by Muslims. Even after the withdrawal of a large number of East Bengali boat-men, small country crafts are largely navigated by Muslim *majhis* from 24-parganas and other adjoining districts of West Bengal, though not with the same degree of numerical dominance as over 25 years age.

There will probably be very few buildings in the city where brick laying has not been done by Muslim masons and they continue to be inevitable for constructions that require brick instead of concrete which is of recent origin.

The fruit trade both dry and seasonal has been mainly in the hands of the wholesale Muslim fruit merchants of Mechuabazar. The Peshawari groups like Awan, Kakazai, Kalal and Kashmiri-Peshawari as well as Raie from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, having green grocery as their traditional occupation have been associated with the trade. The monopolistic control of these groups over the trade is not as perfect to-day as it was some 25 years ago, yet they still remain in substantial control of the market in the line. Even hawking of fruits on roadside pavements is mostly done by the Muslim Raie.

Quite a large number of occupations constitute hereditary calling of both Hindu and Muslim groups in the city. Both Hindu and Muslim communities consist of ethnic groups or castes with trading as their hereditary occupations. The Kachchi and Halai Memands, the Dawoodi Bohra, the Ismaili Khoja and the Qaum-e-Punjabian groups of Delhi and Anwla, all Muslim trading groups have

their counterparts among the Hindus. The occupations of green grocery, carpentry, cattle rearing or dairy farming, trapping and dealing in birds, fish mongering and even that of butchers from the hereditary callings of both Hindu and Muslim groups which continue to be pursued in the city. The professions of barbers and washermen are pursued by Hindu and Muslim groups on hereditary basis and the Muslim Lal Begi sweepers have their Hindu counterparts of Hela, Balmiki and Rout, etc.

The functions of a few Muslims groups like the Iraqi, the Dafali and the Patua deserve special consideration. Their traditional occupations appear to be linked, in varying degrees, more with the Hindu society than with that of the Muslim. The traditional occupation of the Iraqi (Ranki) is distillation (though no longer pursued in Calcutta) which is tabood in Islam and cannot be understood in terms of the functions within the Muslim society. The Dafali make and mend drums and other musical instruments, including those used during pujas in the city. The services of many of them as well as those of several other Muslim drummers such as the Raie are requisitioned during the puja season when seasonal migration of quite a number of their group men takes place during the period from August to February every year. The traditional occupation of the Patua, the painting of deity, has its function with regard to the Hindu society.

The kind of garments required to be used for pujas and by the priests in temples are made by weavers including Muslim weavers in Bihar and other places and the traditional occupation of weavers, wherever it is pursued, continues to serve the Hindus in the city even in the sphere of religion. Several specialised items of decoration made by Muslims are obtained by the image makers of Kumartoli in north Calcutta in making images for pujas in the city.

In regional framework as for example of Rajasthan, we notice that several Muslim groups such as Shekhawati, Madi, Manihar, Nai etc., have generally followed Rajasthani Hindu businessmen to serve them in many ways. Their occupations of dying, bangle-making etc., are linked for operation with the requirements of their Hindu patrons for whom they continue to work. They had been living in the same area until they had to shift to Muslim areas in recent times. Incidentally, rapid changes in the dress and ornaments of the affluent Marwari women, progressively discarding their colourful *chundri* and *ghaghra* as well as traditional form of lac bangle, has resulted in tremendous strain on the respective Muslim occupational groups whose economic condition is in conspicuous contrast with their affluent patrons.

Thus merely a 'general observation' enables us to notice that Muslim occupational groups render specialised services to the city's population in several fields, while in several others they compete with Hindu castes having identical occupations. In some other fields the operation of the traditional occupation of the Muslim ethnic groups appears to be more meaningful in relation to the Muslim society while in several other Hindu and Muslim groups give the impression of mutual functional exclusiveness.

At any rate the functional arrangement of Hindu and Muslim occupational groups has rarely been exclusive or limited to their own respective communities. This has rather been inter-dependent in a number of spheres of activities. In several spheres a group belonging to one community caters to the needs of the other community almost exclusively or at least the hereditary occupations of these groups are oriented towards rendering service to the other community. This we have seen in the case of the Dafali and the Patua.

The arrangement of traditional occupations within the Hindu and the Muslim communities as it is operative in the city does not only demonstrate a functional coexistence but occasional interdependence as well, suggesting a picture of a larger social framework in spite of clear divergence in religious beliefs and practices within their respective folds. At least in the operation of traditional occupations Hindu and Muslim societies do not present a picture of isolation or respective selfsufficiency, rather their interdependence make them appear to be complementary to each other and they functionally constitute a whole in a wider sense.

This interrelationship between the Hindus and the Muslims is largely true in the sphere where traditional occupation has a chance to operate. But the impact of the Muslims in general and of Bengali speaking Muslims in particular on the modern institutions of the city is negligible to the extent of insignificance. Despite being predominant in the neighbourhood of Calcutta, in the numerical sense, the Bengali Muslims do not figure adequately in the city's life with the result that the community has not been able to generate a middle class to any notable extent. This is in sharp contrast with the situation prevailing among the Bengali Hindus. Generally speaking, modernisation of a trade has tended to throw the Muslims somewhat out of tune and this is true of the trades that have been modernised both through private enterprise and Government endeavours.

SUMMARY

Occupations of hereditary nature continue to be pursued in Calcutta

by groups despite changes occuring due to rapid mechanization and emergence of a large number of new occupations. This is true of a large number of Muslim occupational groups. A number of specialised services are rendered by Muslim groups to the city which are either their traditional or non-traditional occupations.

Quite a few traditional occupations are hereditary callings of both Hīndu and Muslīm groups while some others remain the specialization of groups within either of the two communities. A few occupations constituting the hereditary callings of Muslim groups are more meaningful in the context of the wider Indian society than the Muslim community alone, based on Islamic concept of society. In regional contexts the occupational specialization of Muslim groups are linked with the wider regional groups as in the case of the Rajasthani groups in Calcutta.

Despite occupational specialization of Hindu and Muslim groups in several fields of activity, the operation of these occupations are, excepting in a few spheres, generally not limited within their respective religious communities. Services are generally rendered and received indiscriminately within non-ritual spheres. The arrangement of traditional occupations show functional coexistence and occasional interdependence.

8

The System of Caste and the Muslims of Calcutta

Having briefly examined the concept of society in Islam to be of egalitarian nature we had proceeded to observe the aspects of the organization of Muslim society in the city of Calcutta. Muslims in this major Indian city constitute the second largest religious community as a minority group, living with Hindus as a dominant majority, who have a social system which is characterised by caste.

We had started with the hypothesis that if endogamy and intergroup stratification are not deeply entrenched in the Muslim society in India they will operate in a particularly feeble manner in their society in the urban situation. We had also addressed ourselves to the task of delineating the specific idiom of stratification among the Muslim ethnic grops in Calcutta, though we were not necessarily anticipating a perfect identity with the Hindu caste system.

In course of an extensive field study among the Muslim groups in Calcutta, the features of segmentation, endogamy, internal autonomy, hierarchy, as also of overall organization were clearly observable. The segmentation is mainly on national, regional and ethnic lines. Nationality as distinguished from alienness is generally reflcted in occasional common endeavours that assume duties and obligations with regard to fellow nationals within the community. The aliens give evidence of very little activity as indicative of social involvement with the nationals. The segments of regional character are reflected in common or related dialects. food habits, mode of dress and similar other traits of culture as well as often in physical features.

The ethnic segments either drawn exclusively from a region or extending beyond regional boundaries are based on descent and are known by their backgrounds, including those of traditional occupation. In spite of changes in occupation, partial or complete, the groups remain endogamous on the basis of descent and ethnic backgrounds.

Inter-ethnic marriages have been possible within the groups of identical social status based on comparable backgrounds (within Block I) and mainly within smaller sects of *Athna' Ashari Shia* and *Ahmadia*. As a result of rigid maintenance of ethnic boundaries through endogamy, deviation from the norms of marrying within the group results in the emergence of sub-groups variously named at various levels, such as, *moulazada*, *bisser* and *birrahe* as against *najeeb-ut-tarafain*, *sudh*, and *asli*, etc. Rigidity in the maintenance of separate boundaries of these sub-groups is also varied at different levels and wealth and position has only a marginal effect in removing the disabilities of the kind. Numerical predominance of groups with backgrounds of hereditary occupations within the Muslim population in the city (*vide* diagram showing caste composition) is one of the main factors responsible for a sharper definition of group endogamy.

Institutions functioning as agencies of internal autonomy are also observed. Groups in the fourth and the third blocks generally have councils of the nature of caste panchayats which exercise considerable powers. There is wide range of variation in structural details of the councils and their mode of operation but as we move upward in the second block we find the organizations generally transformed into welfare societies, until it is absent in the first block. Here again the situation is comparable to what is generally observed in the Hindu society (Hutton[1] : 1946, Harper[2] : 1959 and Mandlebaum[3] : 1958).

Muslim society in Calcutta is not only segmented on ethnic lines but elements of stratification are also observable in it in spite of the constraints of Islamic egalitarianism and the stress of urban mode of fluid interaction. The best agreed positions are those of the Syed at the top and the Lal Begi sweepers at the bottom. Rest of the groups occupy intermediate positions in the hierarchy and relative positions of each are determined by a number of criteria, generally believed by the respondents to be of relevance in determining status hierarchy. These are based on genealogical explanations of superiority or inferi-

1. "It has frequently been observed that the lower the caste in the social scale, the stronger its combination and the more efficient its administration" in 'Caste in India' P. 99, 1947, reprinted in 1969.

2. "The formal caste organization—both intra-village and inter-village of the untouchable, who are repressed by all other castes, is more tightly knit than that of the sudras, while the latter is more highly structured than that of the Havik Brahmins" *vide* 'Political Organization of the Karnataka Village' in Leadership and Political Institutions in India.

3. "There is usually more effective panchayats in the middle and lower blocks of the local system than in the highest brackets" *vide* 'Family, Jati and Village in structure and change in Indian Society.'

ority, history of conquest and administration, style of life of the group in general and such other factors as degree of unskilled manual labour involved in occupational activities, relative economic dependence or independence implied in traditional occupations, working or non-working of women, observance or non-observance of *purda* (outside the influence of modernity), idea of superiority or inferiority of occupations related to the dergee of 'cleanliness' or 'uncleanliness' involved in them.

Basing on these determinants of status hierarchy,a broad consensus regarding relative positions of each group emerges, though there can still be conflicting claims as has been the case in the Hindu society (Chapple and Coon, 1947)[4]. The broad categorisation of these groups, on the basis of status based on shared characteristics, is logically meaningful. This confirms the earlier suggestion of Ansari (1961) with regard to Uttar Pradesh, though no specific names of the kind proposed by him for the blocks were found to be in currency and referred to on the conscious level.

Despite equality in the performance of rituals in the sphere of *Shariat* the inter-group distance in the hierarchy of the ascribed status of the groups is present. This distance is generally defined in terms of non-ritual attributes except in the case of the pir and the rest. In the organization of sects, however, no sect has any accepted precedence over others and within a sect only acheived attributes in terms of the tradition of the sect lead to distinction. In the organization of the khanqah we, however, observe the position of the hereditary pir as patron in relation to his mureeds.

Stories of individual mobility, through concocted genealogies, as we notice, are of very limited validity. Such incidents are rare and whenever occur, the individuals concerned become an object of ridicule in the known circles.

Group mobility movements are, however, come across, particularly among the groups wedded to traditional occupations, mainly in Block III. The movement in the city synchronises with the movement

4. E. D. Chapple and C. S. Coon writing in their book 'Principles of Anthropology' observe that "the general belief that these castes are hierarchically arranged into a stratified society, each of which has its own special place in a kind of 'peck' order, is based upon a mistaken notion as to what constitutes a hierarchy. There is no definite gradation in which each caste originates only to those below it, and only responds to its superior. Nor does each caste necessarily occupies the same position in each of the institutions, political, religious and economic. One group may flatter itself by saying that it is not as others, but that does not mean that all would agree to its claims of relative superiority" *vide*, pp. 436-437.

elsewhere within the groups concerned and is characterised by adoption of surnames of more Islamic character from the higher status groups. Other manifestations of the movement is adoption of higher styles of life such as withdrawal of women from work, enforcement of vieling and imposition of rules through panchayats that are consistent with greater respectability in the Muslim society.

The mobility movement is directed towards raising the status of the group within the society. This presupposes the presence of inequality of social status, for there is no scope for raising the status of a group *vis-a-vis* others in a society where there is no status hierarchy. The downward movement as we saw results in the emergence of subgroups of inferior status within several groups as a result of the violation of group norms.

Clearly enough the mobility movements do not seek to do away with inequality in society but aim at either raising the status of the group through the adoption of certain symbols or lowering its status as a result of the violation of certain norms. The symbols adopted particularly for upward mobility movements may indicate a direction towards greater integration with Muslim society, yet the idiom and the formula remains typically the same as that of the caste.

The study of Shariat and its institutions, that provide the Muslims with a community identity, leads one to observe sects. The sects cut across the ethnic boundaries but division on sectarian lines leave the decisive bulk of the people in the third block largely unaffected by such vivisection and they remain Sunni. Their enblock conversion through the influence of saints, as suggested by annecdotes and their reverence to particular silsilas, has helped them in preserving their homogeneity in the sphere of sects.

An examination of the general principles on which the sects are based, will reveal quite significant facts of indirect implications. Leaving aside the small Ahmadia and the three Shia sects, of insignificant numerical strength, we notice that the fundamentalist Ahl-e-Hadith and the two Sunni sub-sects namely the Deobandi and the Barelvi virtually dominate the scene as the main sectarian groups. If we range these three sectarian groups from one end to the other, in a sort of continuum, on the basis of the degree of their conformity with the Islamic Great Tradition, we shall notice that the Ahl-e-Hadith who stand for maximum conformity are least numerous while the Barelvi who incorporate maximum elements of 'little tradition' or are least critical of these elements, stand at the other end and virtually engulf the scene. Thus the nature of the sects in the city indirectly provides

a basis for the persistence of the structural form of the society, for no conscious effort is observed to be directed towards a change and least of all by numerically most dominant.

Shariat is claimed to be the main factor guiding the lives of the individuals and group in the society. But society in its function demonstrates a good deal of adaptivity in a manner that while the prescribed and tabood ranges of marriage and kinship are observed, the general rules of caste with regard to endogamy are not transgressed. This adaptivity, however, amounts to deviation from the ideals enshrined in the Shariat. The deviation occurs as we had referred to in earlier chapter in the intermediate categories of the Shariat namely permissible and disapproved and not in the obligatory and tabood categories.

An example may make the position clear. Islam permits marriage between the members of one group and the other, irrespective of their backgrounds. Thus marriage between a Syed who is accorded with 'highest' social status and say a Lal Begi who is believed to be occupy ing 'lowest' position in society is quite possible so far as the religious precepts are concerned. But if the individuals concerned do not contract a marriage and observe a self imposed restriction on such relationship, no laws of Shariat compell them to do so. Customarily desisting from inter-ethnic marriages may be against the *spirit* of the Shariat but not against its *letters*. The social norm condemns such a relationship to the extent of loosing status or of ostracism depending upon the level of the society one belongs to. The same is true of the practice of allowing hypergamy to certain groups. If we apply the same principles to the pattern of interdining or non-aceeptance of food from those pursuing the occupation of sweepers and even to a punctilious regard to the traditional occupation in spite of freedom granted by Islam, we see the 'spirit' of the Shariat being violated and not its 'letters', in the strict sense of the term. This is so because the Shariat does not enjoin upon any one to marry with a person of a particular background nor does it make it obligatory to receive food from the other or to pursue a particular occupation.

The urban setting has its own impact which, as we saw, is visible in different spheres. This includes progressive use of group councils as welfare agencies for the group. The mode of operation of the hereditary occupations is on the basis of purely monetary economy, encouraging the development of impersonal relationship and helping the formation of classes. Commensality in eating houses is extremely broad based embracing not only one's own community but often going

beyond it. The development of class patterns on account of differential economic statuses and educational attainments, leads to the emergence of sub-divisions within ethnic groups. The Islamic Great Tradition finds scope for operation in the form of emergence of agencies for the collection of *zakat*, establishment of a large number of *maktabs* and *madrasahs* and other sectarian and *tableeghi* activities.

Despite the impact of urban situation the basic structural elements of caste such as segmentation of society into endogamous ethnic groups, aspects of hierarchy in a large area of interrelationship, occupational specialization and even such features as institutions to maintain internal autonomy of the segments are present in the Muslim society in Calcutta. It should also be noted that the Muslim society or at any rate a very large section thereof, remains in functional relationship of a very special nature within a larger framework of division of labour that includes the Hindu society in the city. The patterning of division of labour in the arrangement of hereditary occupations of ethnic group shows the following broad characteristic features :

(a) Groups of identical occupational backgrounds such as barbers, washermen, sweepers and in several regional groups, such occupational categories as oil-pressers, iron-smiths, etc., are present in both the communities of the city of Calcutta.

(b) Quite a large number of functions, mainly unrelated to rituals, constituting the hereditary occupations of the above groups and many others, are indiscriminately performed across the community.

(c) Several hereditary occupations are mainly monopolised within one community and the other community is dependent for the services which are rendered without discrimination.

(d) Several other hereditary occupations of ethnic groups within one community, particularly within the Muslim community, are meaningful in terms of the special requirements outside the fold of the society should it be based on Islamic ideals. The case of the Dafali (drum makers) and Patua (image makers or painters of images) makes the point amply clear.

(e) Several specialised functions are restricted within the respective communities mainly within the sphere of rituals. Functionaries in the sphere within the Hindu society are traditionally oriented (priests, image makers, etc.) while those within the Muslim society generally have no traditional orientation except in the case of those around the *khanqah* and *astanas*. These largely relate to that sphere of religion known as *tariqat* or spiritualism and finds sustenance from the belief of the predominant Barelvi sub-sect of the Sunni.

Thus while Hindu and Muslim societies generally maintain their respective ritual exclusiveness with the help of their specialised institutions and functionaries, drawn from their own respective communities, in other spheres of non-ritual nature the two do not present a picture of exclusiveness. The two are interdependent in the matter of rendering and receiving specialised services both through clientship and in an impersonal way in the urban situation. The overall pattern of division of labour, as has re-emerged or has regrouped itself in the city, suggests the picture of a larger organization that is shared by both Hindu and Muslim groups at least in receiving and rendering of services of specialised nature, based on hereditary occupations. Incidentally the nature of functional interrelationship we observe among the Hindu and the Muslim occupational groups has a parallel in some respects in the tribal situation, say the Munda or the Khasi where a change in religion, on the part of a section, does not necessarily lead to its isolation from the other section of the tribe and they continue to have kinship ties with one another. While the tribe is a homogeneous group, the caste is integrated into a system with other castes of varied character and the interrelationship of these castes is largely functional in terms of specialised services.

It is true that the dividing line between the sacred and the secular is often not very sharp and clear-cut. Part of the activities around rituals may be of secular nature and *vice-versa*. For example, sweets distributed in a *milad* may be made by Hindu *halwai* or confectioner while the main performance has to be done by a Muslim *milad khawn*. Similarly worshipping a deity has to be done by a Brahmin priest but certain decorative materials for the image may be provided by a Muslim and several other services may be rendered by them before the image is installed as a deity[5]. The dividing line is, however, persent and the actors know their actual roles and their limitations. The limits actually constitute the dividing line between the sacred and the secular. The argument that cultural and social aspects within a society are fully integrated into a system is also irrefutable but the rate of change in the sphere of culture appears to be faster than in the sphere of society and its structure.

It also appears that in the urban milieu of Calcutta the dominant Hindus have also slowly modified their cultural norms in order to articulate themselves meaningfully with orther minority groups, inclu-

5. The image makers of Kumartoli in north Calcutta were reported by P. J. De of Anthropological Survey of India to be obtaining materials of decoration for the deity , from the Muslims of the city (unpublished field notes).

ding the Muslims who play a very significant roles in the life of the city. The interrelationship between the Hindus and the Muslims through the operation of hereditary occupations has been one of the factors responsible for the persistence of the old rules of society among the Muslims in spite of a change in culture. This persistence is adaptive within the less rigid and less defined intermediate categories of the shariat, well beyond the obligatory and tabood ranges.

This persisting legacy of caste within the numerically dominant section of the Muslim community also provides a basis for its meaningful interaction with diverse groups within the community including the groups believed to be of foreign extraction and without having any background of caste. The latter constituting a very small minority, having shed their original heterogeneity, adapted themselves to this prevailing social climate that offered them to occupy the position of higher status in the emergent hierarchy. This status persists despite their loss of wealth and power under the stress of urban economy and the changed political set-up.

THE TWO SYSTEMS

The Muslim society in the area of our study exemplifies a meeting point of two systems—the cultural ideology of Islam and the social ideals of the caste. The former prevails within the obligatory and tabood categories of the shariat and the latter within the realm of socio-economic interrelationships beyond the two ranges. The situation is, however, not so simple as it has been stated. The two systems of divergent nature influence each other and interact in a way so as to make each adaptive of the other. The character of the sects, as we saw, reflects this adaptive trend in the sense that the most dominant sect is least critical of what is the social norm of the numerically dominant section of the Muslims. Aspects of the social system are regarded as what may be termed as 'sacred' in the sense that they are generally not subject to criticism.

An example of the two systems being adaptive of each other is seen in the endogamy being justified on the basis of a pseudo-religions pre-Islamic Arab concept of *kufv*. This concept is so applied as to make endogamy not only justifiable for the upper levels of society but also the only socially approved method of selecting spouse for the subsequent levels. Further example of this adaptive trend is visible in the fact that the connotation of the term *kufv* is extended from its original meaning of 'a limited range of actual or potential kins' within the ethnic group, as understood among groups in Block I to the entire ethnic group within the subsequent blocks. This extension of the meaning

is for the purpose of what is termed as 'matching the bones' without which impurity is believed to creep in. Similarly the Quranic precepts that suggest the creation of mankind into groups and tribes, are often interpreted to justify the maintenance of ethnic boundaries and even their vertical arrangements. This emergence of spiritual (tariqat) as distinct from jural (shariat) further re-enforces the belief in the birth ascribed superior status of the main functionaries of the former.

The culture, again, brings about change in the pattern of kinship, reducing the marriage distance among several ethnic groups. A progressive disuse of *gotra* among several groups is also noted consequent upon a change in the kinship pattern. Common rituals reduce rather remove the intergroup distance which are observed in the socio-religious sphere.

Of the two interacting systems the culture is generally observed to have a decisive edge in the life of the Muslim community in Calcutta at the 'conscious' level, yet the structural organization acts in a subtle way to make the total life meaningful. The prompt denial about the existence of caste among Muslims by Muslim respondents is easily understood in terms of this conscious model that derives conviction from the rituals of the shariat demonstrating equality. The *letters* of the shariat do not get grossly violated either, at any rate in a large sphere of society, yet in the structural organization as it is operative, the same cannot be said of the *spirit*. The violation of the spirit is intelligible in terms of the 'unconscious' however remote, far flung and receding it may appear to be (Levi Strauss : 281 : 1963).

The model that emerges out of the interaction of the two systems, the Islamic culture and the structure of caste, as we see, is not exactly identical with the Hindu model of caste, yet it bears the main structural features of the caste, and may as well be regarded as a variant of the caste system.

Appendixes

APPENDIX I

Some of the main institutions that have emerged in Calcutta, within the framework of the Islamic Great Tradition in response to the various needs of the Muslim community in the city are (i) Orphanages, (ii) Bait-ul-Mals (organization for the collection and distributions of charitable funds), (iii) Maktabs and Madrasahs, (iv) Centres for the treatment of the sick and (v) Organization for the disposal of the dead destitutes. Some of these are as follows :

(i) Orphanages

Orphaned, unclaimed for and abandoned children are taken care of in the orphanages and besides boarding and lodging they are provided with education upto School Final or Higher Secondary standard. Besides these orphanages a number of Madrasahs sustained by charities also run kitchen to feed poor and orphaned pupils, particularly those who memorise the Quran. The orphanages are as follows :

1. Calcutta Muslim Orphanage (Boys' Section)
   8, Syed Saleh Lane.
2. Calcutta Muslim Orphanage (Girls' Section)
   Sharif Lane.

These orphanages are run under the same organization. The former has a capacity for 216 boys and the latter for about 100 girls.

(ii) Bait-ul-Mals are of the nature of voluntary associations that collect *zakat*, *fitra* and other charitable funds from the Muslim community in the city. The funds so collected are generally spent on such matters as : (1) helping the poor including poor students of schools and colleges when they approach for help, (2) by way of assistance in the marriage of poor girls, (3) regular help to the needy and (4) financial assistance to the poor during illness and in some cases

running of educational institutions (as in the case of Bait-ul-Mal Girls' High School run by Bait-ul-Mal Narkeldanga). The Bait-ul-Mals are as follows :

1. Bait-ul-Mal Rajabazer, 11/2, Harsi Street
2. Bait-ul-Mal Narkeldanga, 2/3, Chamru Singh Lane
3. Bait-ul-Mal Tanti Bagh, 19/A, Cantofer Lane
4. Bait-ul-Mal Kidderpur, 34, Dent Mission Road
5. Bait-ul-Mal Mafeed-ul-Islam Lane, 42, Mafeed-ul-Islam Lane
6. Bait-ul-Mal Belgachia Badi Masjid, Belgachia
7. Bait-ul-Mal Metiaburj.

(iii) *Maktabs* and *Madrasahs* are centres of learning where usually primary education is given through mother tongues mainly Urdu (Bengali being the medium in some of the maktabs in Metiaburj area). Reading and recitation of the Quran and religious instruction of a very primary nature is compulsory in the institutions. These institutions are generally preparatory in nature where secular learning is combined with religious education at the end of which the children either drop out or go to middle and secondary schools, those going to higher centres of traditional learning in Calcutta or elsewhere in the country are very insignificant. Children dropping out are over 92% and of those who go up to attend schools less than 50% have a chance of completing high school education. Nearly 54% of these institutions are situated in the mosques and are run either by local committees or are the result of individual efforts, including those of teachers themselves, for self employment or even by the group panchayat of a particular ethnic group. Fxpenses are met by donations, collection of charitable funds and even by a small fees charged from the pupils who can pay.

Some of the institutions, grouped under compact contiguous areas, are as follows :

Ward Nos. 1—5*

1. Maktab Ansarul Islam (mosque) 29, Jheel Road
2. Maktab Baisakh Bagan (mosque)
3. Maktab Rajabagan (mosque), 1/5, Khagen Chatterjee Road
4. Madrasah Islamia (mosque), 11, Lock Gate Road
5. Madrasah Islamia, 2, Gopal Mukherjee Road
6. Madrasah Moinul Islam, Lock Gate Road
7. Islamia Primary School, 7/8, Gopi Mandal Lane

*Wards are as they were in 1961 on which the census report is based.

8. Darsgah-e-Islami (mosque), 3/2A, J. K. Ghosh Road
9. Darsgah-e-Islami (branch), 1/7, J. K. Ghosh Road
10. Madrasah Ahamadia (Choti Masjid), 1/2, J. K. Ghosh Road
11. Madrasah Ahmadia (branch), 1/7, J. K. Ghosh Road
12. Ta'leem-ul-Quran (Badi Masjid), 83/D, Belgachia Road

Ward Nos. 22, 23 & 27

13. Madrasah Hedayat-ul-Islam (mosque), 43, Munshi Sadruddin Lane
14. Qaderia Primary School (mosque), 60, Madan Mohan Burman Street
15. Maktab (mosque), 4, Marcus Square
16. Maktab Al-e-Islam (mosque), 15/2, Syed Saleh Lane
17. Madrasah Naeemia Arabia (mosque), 142, Chittaranjan Avenue
18. Madrasah Himayat-e-Islam, 145B, Chittaranjan Avenue
19. Madrasah Usmania, 36, Madan Mohan Burman Street
20. Madrasah Yateem Khana Islamia, 8, Syed Saleh Lane
21. Madrasah Ta'leem-ul-Quran, 3, Nawab Badruddin Street
22. Madrasah Arabia Jamalia (mosque), 98, Lower Chitpur Road

Ward Nos. 29, 31, 32, 33, 34 & 35

23. Madrasah Bait-ul-Uloom (mosque), 145, Keshab Chandra Sen Street
24. Maktab (mosque), 18, Vidya Ratna Lane
25. Madrasah Ta'leem-ul-Quran, 155/B, Keshab Chandra Sen Street
26. Maktab Khola (masjid), 4, Kali Shome Street
27. Maktab Rajabazar Welfare Society, 2/B, Gas Street
28. Maktab Pakki (masjid), 3, Raja Rajnarayan Street
29. Maktab Kachchi (masjid), 3C, Gas Street
30. Maktab Bait-ul-Mal (mosque), 150, Narkeldanga Main Road
31. Maktab (mosque), 2, Patua Para Lane
32. Madrasa-e-Hanafia (mosque), 96, Narkeldanga North Road
33. Maktab (mosque), 15, Kasai Bustee First Lane
34. Maktab (mosque), 7, Kasai Bustee Second Lane
35. Maktab Anjuman Millat Committee, 6/11/2, Kasai Bustee Second Lane
36. Madrasah Mahmoodia (mosque), 9, Harsi Street
37. Maktab Jinnati (mosque), North Sealdah Road (Haji Para)

38. Maktab Khola (masjid), 47A, Canal East Road
39. Maktab Begum (masjid), 16/11/1, Chamru Singh Lane

Ward Nos. 37, 40, 41 & 42

40. Madrasah Islamia Ehsania (mosque), 43/A, Canning Street
41. Madrasah Ahl-e-Hadith (mosque), 22, Bolai Dutta Street
42. Madrasah Anjuman Neda-e-Islam (mosque), 80, Phears Lane
43. Madrasah Azmatia, 120, Lower Chitpur Road
44. Madrasat-ul-Huffza (mosque), 81/1, Phears Lane
45. Madrasah Himayat-e-Islam (mosque), 82, Phears Lane
46. Madrasah Darul Furqan Faiz-ul-Uloom, 1, Shri Nath Babu Lane
47. Madrasah Azmatia, 22/1, Eden Hospital Road
48. Madrasah Noorania (mosque), 6, Nilmadhab Sen Lane
49. Meer Ramazan Ali Madrasah-School (mosque), 14, Eden Hospital Road
50. Madrasah Noorania (mosque), 6, Nilmadhab Sen Lane
51. Madrasah Islamia, 13/B, Princep Street
52. Maktab (mosque), 12, Princep Street

Ward Nos. 48 & 49

53. Madrasah Dar-ul-Quran Siddiqui, 5/H/16, Bibi Bagan Lane
54. Maktab Bibi Bagan (mosque), 8, Bibi Bagan Lane
55. Maktab (mosque), 5, Moti Jheel Lane
56. Maktab for Girls, 4, Convent Lane
57. Maktab Mir Mehar Ali Road (mosque), 15, Mir Mehar Ali Road

Ward Nos. 50, 51, 52, 53, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59 & 60

58. Taltalla Madrasah, 17/2, Smith Lane
59. Madrasah Husainia, 51, Taltalla Lane
60. Madrasah Imdadia, 1, Imdad Ali Lane
61. Madrasah Quddusia, 27, Taltalla Lane
62. Darsgah-e-Islami, 45, Taltalla Lane
63. Madrasah Ibrahimia (mosque), 13/2, Marsdan Street
64. Madrasah Qadria Moinia, 67, Khanqah Shariff Lane
65. Madrasah Furqania (mosque), 49 B, Lower Circular Road

66. Maktab Choti (masjid), 56, Alimuddin Street
67. Madrasah Ashrafia, 2, Sandal Street
68. Madrasah Faiz-ul-Islam, 4/2, Nawab Abdul Lateef Street
69. Deeni Maktab Mehdi Bagan Welfare Society (Boys' Section), 2, Nawab Abdul Lateef Street
70. Maktab Badi (masjid), 4 Alimuddin Street
71. Muktab (mosque), 32, Alimuddin Street
72. Deeni Maktab Mehdi Bagan Welfare Society (Girls' Section), 29, Komedan Bagan Lane
73. Maktab (mosque), 9, Shariff Lane
74. Madrasah Ittehad Committee, 100, Collin Lane
75. Madrasah Hamidia, 88/1, Collin Street
76. Madrasah Dar-ul-Uloom Rahmania, 131, Collin Street
77. Maktab Ismail Lane, 12, Ismail Lane
78. Maktab Ismail Lane (mosque), 12, Ismail Lane
79. Maktab Collin Street, 36, Collin Street
80. Maktab Ahl-e-Hadith (mosque), 1, Marquis Lane
81. Deeni Maktab Ittehad-o-Taraqqi, 88, Eliot Road
82. Maktab United Youth Club, 110, Eliot Road
83. Maktab Eliot Lane (mosque), 13, Eliot Lane
84. Maktab (Private), 11, Macleod Street
85. Maktab Eliot Road (mosque), 30, Eliot Road.
86. Maktab Eliot Road (mosque), 21, Eliot Road
87. Maktab Rippon Lane (mosque), 33, Rippon Lane
88. Maktab Lower Circular Road (mosque), 10, Lower Circular Road
89. Madrasah-e-Ta'leem–o-Taraqqi, 42, Jannagar Road
90. Madrasah-e-Ta'leemat–e-Islamia (mosque), 143, Karaya Road
91. Anjuman Hedayat-ul-Islam, 5, Sapgachi First Lane
92. Madrasah Dar-ul-Quran Arabia (mosque), Jamhuria Masjid, Azad Mohalla, 73, Topsia Road
93. Edara-e-Ta'leem-o-Tanzeem, 19A, Cantopher Lane
94. Madrasah Rashidia, 24, Cantopher Lane
95. Tanti Bagh Educational Society, 9, Tanti Bagan Lane
96. Madrasah-e-Ittehadia, 20/1, Tanti Bagan Lane
97. Anjuman Mofid-ul-Islam Deeni Maktab (Boys' and Girls' Section), 20, Noor Ali Lane
98. Madrasah Furqania, 3, Anjuman Road
99. Madrasah-e-Rahmania, 3, Anjuman Road
100. Bania Pokhar Junior Madrasah, 3, Anjuman Road

101. Madrasat ussabaya (Junior High Madrasah), 20, Komedon Bagan Lane
102. Madrasah Sada-e-Islam (mosque), 22, Ahiri Pukur Road
103. Deeni Maktab Anjuman Ta'leem-o-Taraqqi, 7, Ahiri Pukur Road
104. Jamea Ta'leemat-e-Islami (mosque), 37, Karaya Road
105. Madrasah Farooqia (mosque), 30, Beck Bagan Row
106. Madrasah Tajweed-ul-Furqania, 36, Jhowtolla Road
107. Maktab Arhatdar (masjid), 39, Bright Street
108. Madrasah Tajweed-ul-Quran (mosque), 46, Shams-ul-Hoda Road
109. Maktab Bahubibi (masjid), 24/1, Palm Avenue

Word Nos. 73, 74 & 75

110. Maktab Haji Gulam Ansari (mosque), 35A, Mominpur Road
111. Madrasah Eidgah, Bindu Basini Street, 5, Bindu Basini Street
112. Wahidia Madrasah, 42, Eqbalpur Lane
113. Darul Uloom-e-Islamia, 33, Dent Mission Road
114. Maktab Shahani Begam (mosque), 49, Diamond Harbour Road
115. Maktab Haji Kabil (mosque), 16/8, Eqbalpur Lane
116. Madrasah Ta'leemul Islam, 27B, Circular Garden Reach Road
117. Maktab Kaila Sarak (mosque), 17/1, Moulana Mohammad Ali Road
118. Madrasah Anjuman Mofid-ul-Islam, 11/2, Moulana Mohammad Ali Road
119. Madrasah Shanti Sangh, 18/1, Moulana Mohammad Ali Road
120. Madrasah Sultania, 9, Mahammadan Burial Ground Lane
121. Darul Quran Madrasah Azmatia, 11, Watganj Street
122. Madrasah Austin Beria (mosque), 21, Watganj Street

Ward No. 78

(Old Tollygunj Municipal Area)

123. Rahim Bux Ostagar Estate Mollahat Maktab (mosque), 38, Prince Anwar Shah Road
124. Mollahat Primary School (formerly Mallahat Maktab), 15, Prince Rahimuddin Lane

Besides these, some 43 centres of primary learning were seen mostly located in mosques in Metiaburj area both within the Garden Reach Municipality and its immediate surroundings.

(iv) Centres for the treatment of the sick :

1. Islamia Hospital, Chittaranjan Avenue
2. Delhi Medical Hospital, 9, Bolai Dutta Street
3. Mohammad Ali Hospital, Amertalla Lane

Of the three centres of medical care only the first two were found to be functioning while the third is said to have closed down temporarily. Delhi Medical Hospital run by the Qaum-e-Punjabian, Delhi treats an average daily of 350 outpatients. Islamia Hospital with 130 beds has an average of 96 indoor patients and attends to an average daily of 180 outpatients. Facilities for treatment are available for all irrespective of community or caste.

(v) Organization for the disposal of the dead and for other emergency services :

1. Anjuman Mofidul Islam, Mofidul Islam Lane

The organization makes arrangement for coffin for the dead destitutes of the community usually dying on the pavements and makes arrangement for coffin and other ritual services necessary. The organization also provides ambulance for emergency services to carry the sick to hospitals.

APPENDIX II

Some Sacred Places of Muslims in Calcutta

Some sacred places that relate to the sphere of *tariqat* consist of *astanas* or *dargahs* where the mortal remains of the saint or the pir lie in eternal rest and the *khanqahs* where one *silsila* or the other continues through a succeeding pir. The former is a place of reverence for the devotees who visit it mainly for fateha and offerings. The living head of the khanqah known as the pir recruits new devotees or *mureeds* and is a rallying point for old ones. The astanas or dargahs and the khanqahs are as follows :

(i) Astanas and dargahs

1. Dargah Hazrat Moala Ali Shah,
   153, Acharya Jagdish Chandra Road

2. Astana Khawja Miskeen Ali Shah Chiragh-e-Bangala, 24, Baniapukur Road
3. Astana Hazrat Mehr Ali Shah, 20, Lower Circular Road
4. Astana (mazar) Hazrat Rustam Shah Chishti, Sola Ana Burial Ground, Kidderpur
5. Astana Hazrat Juma Pir Raja Katra, Burra Bazar
6. Astana Rajab Ali Shah, Hastings, Calcutta
7. Astana Lattu Shah Chishti, 36, Desh Pran Sasmal Road, Tollygunj
8. Astana Shah Sufi Azan Gachi Baghmari Burial Ground, Maniktala
9. Dargah Baba Hasan Raza Shah Waresi 1, Raicharan Pal Lane, Gobra Burial Ground
10. Astana Baba Mohammad Shah Waresi, 17, Tiljala Sibtala Lane, Calcutta
11. Dargah Shah Aman Ali Qaderi Chishti Abul Alai Enayati Munemi, Aman Shah Lane, Kidderpur
12. Dargah Shah Husain Bukhsh Qaderi Chishti, 19/1, Husain Shah Road
13. Dargah Panja Shah Husaini, 15, Kashipur Road.

(ii) Khanqah

1. Khanqah Sharif, Taltalla Lane
2. Khanqah Sharif, 30, European Asylum Lane
3. Darbar Sharif, Mofidul Islam Lane
4. Khanqah Waresia, 12, Sandal Street
5. Khanqah Chishtia Nizamia. 70, Mofid-ul-Islam Lane
6. Khanqah Mojaddidia Naqshbandia, 17, Moulana Mohammad Ali Road.

APPENDIX III

Some of the educational institutions are run by the group organizations and their management is mainly in the hands of the respective ethnic groups. The expenses of these institutions are generally met by the panchayat funds though admission of pupils is not restricted to the gooup. The institutions are as follows :

(i) *Raie (green grocer)*

1. Madrasah Usmania, 36, Madan Mohan Burman Street

2. Madrasah Ta'leem-o-Taraqqi, Karaya Road
3. Madrasah Ittehadia, 20/1. Tanti Bagan Lane
4. Madrasah Noor-ul-Islam, 3, Tanti Bagan Lane
5. Madrasah Rahmania, 1, Anjuman Road
6. Madrasah Ramazania, 76, Linton Street

(ii) *Qureshi (butchers)*

1. Madrasah Ta'leem-ul-Quran (formerly Madrasah Sulaimania), 155, Keshab Chandra Sen Street
2. Maktab Tanzeem-ul-Quresh, 4/3, Kasai Bustee second Lane
3. Maktab Anjuman Millat Committee, 6/11/2 Kasai Bustee Second Lane
4. Madrasah-e-Quresh, 166/7/3, Dr. A. K. Road, Rajabagan, Metiaburj.

(iii) *Momin (Ansari)*

Being numerically the most dominant group within the Muslim community in Calcutta tne members of the group virtually dominate most of the educational institutions as also most of the voluntary associations of the Muslims of general nature. The following institution is, however, established by group funds and is managed by Momin Education Board set up for the spread of education among the group. Admission in the institution is, however, not restricted to boys belonging to its own group. The institution is as follows :

1. Momin High School, 35, Narkeldanga Main Road.

APPENDIX IV

Hindu and Muslim Population (Wardwise) According to 1961 Census

City/Ward	Grand Total	Hindus			Muslims			P.c. of the Muslims to the total general population
	Persons	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	
Calcutta	2,927,289	1,493,321	963,823	2,457,144	267,560	106,566	374,126	12.13
Ward No. 1	43,050	22,608	15,367	37,975	3,521	1,269	4,790	11.13
2	37,484	20,463	15,160	35,623	216	934	1,150	3.07
3	30,708	16,358	9,497	25,855	2,878	1,717	3,795	12.36
4	47,403	25,997	18,376	44,373	326	1,946	2,272	4.79
5	52,933	24,977	17,260	42,237	6,060	4,132	10,192	19.25
6	24,813	14,145	10,032	24,177	11	251	262	1.06
7	37,361	20,591	15,812	36,403	444	24	468	1.25
8	23,447	13,645	9,463	23,108	257	4	261	1.11
9	25,822	14,643	11,063	25,706	47	—	47	0.18
10	37,543	22,275	14,578	36,853	309	72	381	1.01
11	28,979	16,361	12,296	28,657	65	165	230	0.79
12	28,210	16,406	11,677	28,083	9	4	13	0.05
13	31,492	13,969	12,438	26,407	4,824	59	4,883	15.51
14	36,370	21,227	14,554	35,781	326	157	483	1.33
15	74,637	41,355	31,268	72,623	538	1,461	1,999	2.68
16	20,975	12,720	6,750	19,470	860	629	1,489	7.10
17	27,206	16,948	10,172	27,120	47	4	51	0.19
18	37,616	22,302	14,247	36,549	284	212	496	1.32
19	32,482	21,899	9,529	31,428	883	4	887	2.73
20	44,334	25,648	17,826	43,474	220	7	227	0.51
21	31,889	15,840	9,692	25,532	2,864	718	3,582	11.23
22	38,621	20,295	12,873	33,168	4,498	638	5,136	13.30
23	30,921	14,815	4,875	19,690	7,312	3,254	10,566	34.17
24	21,558	13,781	6,287	20,068	869	3	872	4.04
25	50,915	31,173	17,955	49,128	86	5	91	0.18
26	11,900	8,734	1,487	10,221	440	—	440	3.70

Hindu and Muslim Population (Wardwise) According to 1961 Census—*contd.*

City Ward	Grand Total	Hindus			Muslims			
	Persons	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	P.c. of the Muslims to the total general population
27	23,220	12,006	5,162	17,168	3,059	359	3,418	14.72
28	21,725	12,786	8,666	21,452	122	—	122	0.56
29	40,822	23,556	13,094	36,650	2,613	1,503	4,116	10.08
30	20,472	12,594	7,441	20,035	196	13	209	1.02
31	30,984	14,254	7,232	21,486	6,130	2,975	9,105	29.39
32	43,584	19,531	12,813	32,344	7,010	4,050	11,060	25.38
33	52,174	22,194	17,920	40,114	7,709	4,123	11,832	22.68
34	26,778	14,465	6,820	21,285	3,248	2,062	5,310	19.83
35	67,213	30,606	26,687	57,293	4,543	2,854	7,097	10.56
36	40,450	21,055	18,132	39,187	717	78	795	1.97
37	10,424	7,433	856	8,278	1,278	187	1,465	14.05
38	6,537	5,272	740	6,012	200	47	346	5.29
39	7,320	3,971	1,058	5,029	583	105	688	9.40
40	27,960	10,332	1,396	11,728	8,767	3,386	12,153	43.47
41	36,477	11,718	6,738	18,456	12,765	3,108	15,873	43.52
42	39,940	23,423	5,457	28,880	3,041	2,102	5,143	12.88
43	33,649	20,738	12,439	33,177	139	49	188	0.56
44	23,061	14,680	7,609	22,289	498	182	680	2.95
45	32,107	15,055	12,060	27,115	4,200	4	4,204	18.19
46	27,878	16,893	9,913	26,806	319	226	545	1.95
47	34,406	16,184	10,857	27,041	4,119	1,668	5,787	16.82
48	48,749	26,516	15,949	42,465	4,012	1,546	5,558	11.40
49	39,240	19,691	13,230	32,921	4,166	1,457	5,623	14.33
50	41,451	17,380	11,264	28,644	7,645	1,201	8,846	21.34
51	30,094	2,144	1,230	3,374	16,533	5,191	21,724	72.19
52	39,437	22,425	6,149	28,574	6,882	953	7,835	19.87
53	40,612	12,138	5,798	17,936	10,161	2,030	12,191	30.02
54	8,234	2,883	1,142	4,058	2,058	171	2,229	27.07
55	37,031	11,337	6,435	17,772	10,168	3,935	14,103	38.08
56	18,217	8,802	5,257	14,059	1,647	2,290	3,937	21.61
57	46,299	8,500	9,038	17,538	16,736	8,441	25,177	54.38
58	18,649	7,506	7,251	14,757	3,253	26	3,279	17.58
59	42,722	19,178	12,434	31,612	4,575	2,864	7,439	17.41.

Hindu and Muslim Population(Wardwise) According to 1961 Census—*concld.*

City/Ward	Grand Total	Hindus			Muslims			
	Persons	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	P.c. of the Muslims to the total general population
60	47,117	12,508	6,519	19,027	15,462	11,127	26,589	56.43
61	36,659	21,110	14,954	36,064	222	29	251	0.68
62	52,878	24,617	17,693	42,310	42	91	133	0.31
63	35,498	20,331	14,770	35,101	51	109	160	0.45
64	39,366	22,917	15,960	38,877	60	40	100	0.25
65	44,317	20,211	19,755	39,755	3,983	110	4,093	9.24
66	29,609	15,849	12,825	28,674	699	4	703	2.37
67	24,941	14,588	10,025	24,613	183	53	236	0.95
68	34,028	20,171	13,112	33,283	92	26	118	0.35
69	22,939	11,302	8,053	19,355	1,208	65	1,273	5.55
70	50,538	28,212	19,950	48,162	380	24	404	0.80
71	22,971	13,816	4,938	18,754	2,625	501	3,126	13.61
72	61,064	32,990	25,895	58,885	1,085	149	1,234	2.02
73	48,344	17,505	12,077	29,582	13,662	4,398	18,060	37.36
74	55,708	21,870	11,269	33,139	14,358	6,288	20,586	36.95
75	82,892	49,702	19,909	69,611	9,216	2,336	11,552	13.94
76	55,348	29,232	20,702	49,934	1,907	2,691	4,598	8.31
77	56,794	31,261	25,007	56,268	370	74	444	0.78
78	43,861	22,307	17,916	40,223	2,195	1,161	3,356	7.65
79	42,638	22,236	19,398	41,634	564	67	631	1.48
80	70,314	36,088	32,444	68,532	1,116	359	1,475	2.10
Sp. Charge No. 81 (Fort)	8,225	4,957	2,059	7,016	147	9	156	1.92
Sp. Charge No. 82 (Canals)	737	722	—	722	8	—	8	1.09
Sp. Charge No. 84 (Port-Sea going vends)	2,722	1,509	3	1,512	110	—	110	4.04
Sp. Charge No. 85 (Port-Island vends)	1,294	882	—	882	412	—	412	31.84

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